

#42



COMPLETE

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Q1: Your details:

Name:

Mrs. Jane C. Milne

Address:

Q2: Are you acting on behalf of anyone?

No

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Q3: Who are you acting on behalf of:

Respondent skipped this question

PAGE 3: Representation details

Q4: Please give the policy/paragraph/policies map details for your first representation relates to:

Land at Mount Farm, Whitchurch (WHIT046) s18 Policy MD2

Q5: Is your representation in support or objection?

Object

Q6: In respect of your representation on the policy, paragraph or section of the policies map do you consider that the SAMdev is: See guidance notes sections 1 and 2 for the meanings of 'legally compliant' and 'sound'.

Legally compliant

Yes

Sound

No

Q7: If your representation considers the SAMDev plan is not sound, please say whether this is because it is: (tick as many as apply)

Not positively prepared, Not justified

Q8: Please specify your reason for supporting or objecting. If you are objecting, you should make clear why the document is unsound having regard to the issues of 'legal compliance' or whether the document is not positively prepared, justified, effective or not consistent with national policy.

I am objecting to the soundness of the SAMDev Plan because I believe it is not justified or positively prepared. It is stated that 'the Plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence'.

The reasons for objecting to the soundness of the document which has included the Land at Mount Farm (WHIT046) Schedule S18.1a in the SAMDev are as follows:-

Development Management Policy MD2 1 and 2 states that for a development proposal to be considered acceptable it is required to 'achieve local aspirations for design, wherever possible, both in terms of visual appearance and how a place functions, as set out in Community Led Plans, Town or Village Design Statements, Neighbourhood Plans and Place Plans' and 'contribute to and respect locally distinctive or valued character and existing amenity value by responding appropriately to the form and layout of existing development and the way it functions, including mixture of uses, streetscape, building heights and lines, scale, density, plot sizes and local patterns of movement'...and 'ensure development demonstrates there is sufficient existing infrastructure capacity, in accordance with MD8, and should wherever possible actively seek opportunities to help alleviate infrastructure constraints, as identified with the Place Plans, through appropriate design'

To respond effectively to local character and distinctiveness, a development should not have a detrimental impact on existing amenity value but respond appropriately to the context in which it is set. As such, new developments should respect the existing pattern of development, both visually and in relation to the function of spaces, retain and enhance important views and landmarks and respond appropriately to local environmental and historic assets, in accordance with MD12 and MD13. The proposal to place 100 houses at a net density of almost 30 per hectare on Mount Farm is far too high a scale and density of housing when compared to the adjacent residential sites. In addition the proposal for 2.5/3 storey buildings would mean the buildings heights are also not in keeping. In some instances the proposed plots adjoin their property boundary or are situated 10m or less away. This will have a detrimental impact it will have upon the residents of Wellfield Way and The Grove in terms of visual and the value of their properties. Wellfield Way and Tarporley Road are areas with high end and prestige housing and the proposed site is not in keeping with the character of the area. It will adversely impact upon the open aspect of the current landscape and the proposed development will be outside the present designated area for building.

Before considering the inclusion of Mount Farm in the SAMDev as a preferred site, it is relevant and important to look back at the Government Inspectors report on his findings after the public inquiry on the North Shropshire Local Plan 2000-2011. His view was:-

" the site is elevated and development would be prominent in views from the North and North-West. Viewed from the direction of Tarporley Road the development would occupy open ground above the level of The Grove, extending southwards from Wellfield Way. Much of this land has an undeveloped appearance and is of high visual amenity value.

The character of the landscape in this area at present displays an attractive pastoral quality of relatively small scale fields, with a network of hedgerows and trees. The landscape generally falls from the higher ground by Haroldgate towards the northwest. I consider that it would constitute a substantial area of new development in a relatively sensitive landscape, occupying an elevated position. This is a relatively unspoilt approach to Whitchurch which in my judgement contributes strongly to its character and setting as a rural market town. The impact of existing development on the skyline is limited and the predominant characteristic is of a well maintained rural landscape".

Concern was also raised at that time regarding the lack of a primary school in the vicinity of the site, and the lack of proposals to provide one. As a consequence the decision was made to remove the inclusion of Mount Farm land from the Local Plan. Nothing has changed in the area which would alter this opinion.

Para 4.13 also states that 'on very large sites, it may be appropriate to divide the recreational open space into more than one area in order to provide accessible provision across the development. In such instances it is important that each recreational area is of a sufficient size to be functional. The types of open space provided need to be relevant to the development and its locality and should take guidance from the Place Plans'. The proposed development at Mount Farm has only one designated space and a 10 metre environmental wildlife buffer zone which adjoins a field! The amount of open space is insufficient and the wildlife zone should ideally be situated between the existing development of Wellfield Way and the proposed houses, instead of between the new development and the fields!

Q9: Explain the changes you think should be made to the SAMdev Plan in order to make it legally compliant or sound. You should explain your suggested revisions to the policy, paragraph or section of the policies map and why this change would make the plan legally compliant or sound. Please be as precise as possible.

The proposal to include the land at Mount Farm, Whitchurch gives rise to a large number issues. The proposed development plans clearly do not comply with a number of requirements of the SAMDev Development Management Policy which have been identified above. The proposed development plan for Mount Farm covers a large area of greenfield land and it's 'design' and nature will undoubtedly detract from the current local environment and spoil our market town.

In policy H2 Housing land and Phasing the District Council state that 'they will keep the supply of housing land under review with the aim of ensuring that at any time sufficient land is available to meet the planned needs of the District Council for the next 5 years. The Council will require the phased development of sites listed under policies H4 and H5. This is to assure that the total planned provision is not exhausted in the early years; that an excessive amount of land is not made available at the outset; that a settlement is not swamped by over development and ensure the availability of infrastructure or adequacy of other services in a particular area'. There are other sites which would present greater opportunities to include the necessary provision of infrastructure resources to support increased housing provision in Whitchurch. This proposed development is a Housing estate which is not needed in Whitchurch at the present time. There are over 150 homes currently for sale in Whitchurch unsold. Where are the jobs, schools and services to sustain the influx population? With an ageing population what thought is being given to the shortage of bungalows? There are no substantive proposals for how this population increase might be sensibly sustained. For this reason I believe it should ideally be removed and withdrawn from Planning or at the very least the density, layout, plot size and house types be revised to ensure that MD2 policy requirements are met.

The requirement for increased housing is inevitable but I believe that this should be managed and phased so that infrastructure and employment considerations can also be effectively planned for and achieved.

I hope the Council will take the time and care to visit the site and consider the value of the open nature of this greenfield site and the impact such a development would have on our market town.

Q10: Do you wish to make another representation?

Yes

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Q11: Please give the policy/paragraph/policies map details for your first representation relates to:

Land at Mount Farm, Whitchurch (WHIT046) s18 Policy MD8

Q12: Is your representation in support or objection?

Object

Q13: In respect of your representation on the policy, paragraph or section of the policies map do you consider that the SAMdev is: See guidance notes sections 1 and 2 for the meanings of 'legally compliant' and 'sound'.

Legally compliant

Yes

Sound

No

Q14: If your representation considers the SAMDev plan is not sound, please say whether this is because it is: (tick as many as apply)

Not positively prepared, Not justified

Q15: Please specify your reason for supporting or objecting. If you are objecting, you should make clear why the document is unsound having regard to the issues of 'legal compliance' or whether the document is not positively prepared, justified, effective or not consistent with national policy.

I am objecting to the soundness of the SAMDev Plan in relation to including the land at Mount Farm, Whitchurch because I believe it is not justified or positively prepared. MD8 1 & 2 states 'Development should only take place where there is sufficient existing infrastructure capacity or where the development includes measures to address a specific capacity shortfall which it has created or which is identified in the LDF Implementation Plan or Place Plans. Where a critical infrastructure shortfall is identified, appropriate phasing will be considered in order to make development acceptable;

2. Development will be expected to demonstrate that existing operational infrastructure will be safeguarded so that its continued operation and potential expansion would not be undermined by the encroachment of incompatible uses on adjacent land'

There are proposals for 500 houses at Tilstock Road together with a school, 86 houses to be built next to the Hill Valley Golf Club, 76 houses going on Mile Bank Road brown field site and the 100 houses going on Mount farm. There are currently insufficient places available in local junior schools for existing residents, and the local Doctors/Dental surgeries are also full to capacity. A contribution (the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy of £40 per square metre, ie £500,000) to the local authority is totally inadequate to enable them to improve the necessary services which will be required by the new residents. Who will pay for the increased infrastructure needed to service the extra population eg Doctors, District Nurses, Schools, Police, Fire etc? The commitment and provision of these services requires address and has no mention which is totally unacceptable. Rail services are also abysmal increasing the need for use of cars in the area.

Wastewater infrastructure capacity is also an issue for this proposed development and the scale of development is such that significant hydraulic modelling will be needed. Having lived in the vicinity of the site for 10 years, there are known ground, surface water and drainage issues. There are also issues relating to the electricity supply all of which will require significant capital investment.

Currently sewage from Wellfield Way is pumped up to the highest point of Tarporley Road, near its junction with Haroldgate. According to Welsh Water this pump and pipework may already be at full capacity. The proposal to build a further 100 houses would require updating the sewage system prior to any planning consent or building work commencing.

Further development in the area would also exacerbate the existing problem with surface water and need to be addressed.

The access road Haroldgate is also unsuitable for any increased traffic flow. Despite conforming to general transport regulations of width, a closer and more detailed inspection will show from where the hazards arise. Many of us have used this road through all weathers for 14 years and are acquainted with the problems, but the proposed increase in traffic movement of 700% will provide lethal conditions for all road users. Although we have been informed that access for agricultural vehicles servicing the remaining fields of Mount Farm will not be using Haroldgate as the farmer has acquired another access off the Chester Road there is a very real and potentially dangerous safety issue.

The road has very tight bends as it goes down to Tarporley Road, and slopes sideways as it turns. The gradient is very steep - at the maximum allowed of 1 in 12. This means that during icy conditions it is very difficult and often impossible to access Haroldgate from Tarporley Road as one cannot gain sufficient traction before wheel spin takes over. When descending Haroldgate in frosty weather it is very easy to slide sideways out of control often resulting in one sliding across Tarporley Road. All residents have experienced numerous incidents as it only takes icy conditions to set it off. The bends are so tight it is hard for 2 vehicles to pass at all and only made more perilous during bad weather as we have to resort to parking in Haroldgate as Wellfield Way is too steep to traverse. It is totally unusable for longer vehicles such as a service bus, or emergency vehicles or cars with a trailer or caravan.

If it is intended to service 100 extra houses it will result in a minimum of 180-200 additional cars exiting Haroldgate. Given the current unexpectedly high level of usage already recorded in the Transport Statement by David Tucker Associates, it will undoubtedly become a bottleneck at peak times - the morning and afternoon school run for example. Cars will be used as there are no schools currently within what parents will consider a safe walking distance from the proposed site, with the majority of traffic turning right across Tarporley Road. This will result in excess pollution whilst engines are still cold, increased noise and extended journey times at peak periods while vehicles queue to exit Haroldgate and pose an accident risk given there is a blind summit to the left on Tarporley Road.

The risks associated with using Haroldgate during bad weather will be exacerbated by the massive increase in traffic volume. Vehicles exiting the proposed Mount Farm development will also need to negotiate the considerable gradient to reach the apex of Haroldgate.

'New employment provision is central to the town's settlement strategy and will enable the rebalancing of the town's higher than average levels of out-commuting'

Whitchurch is a dormitory town without much employment available locally to sustain the proposed increase in the number of residents. Where is the evidence that there is a demand for additional housing of this type in Whitchurch and, given the poor bus and rail services, how will this alleviate the higher levels of out-commuting? It is not just employment, but what facilities will be provided for the children and teenagers to keep them occupied and grow up responsibly. Youth clubs etc will have to be provided, but by whom and when.

Q16: Explain the changes you think should be made to the SAMdev Plan in order to make it legally compliant or sound. You should explain your suggested revisions to the policy, paragraph or section of the policies map and why this change would make the plan legally compliant or sound. Please be as precise as possible.

The proposal to include the land at Mount Farm, Whitchurch gives rise to a large number of issues. The proposed development plans clearly do not comply with a number of requirements of the SAMDev Development Management Policy which have been identified above. The proposed development plan for Mount Farm covers a large area of greenfield land and its 'design' and nature will undoubtedly detract from the current local environment and spoil our market town and also brings with it a number of infrastructural issues.

In policy H2 Housing land and Phasing the District Council state that 'they will keep the supply of housing land under review with the aim of ensuring that at any time sufficient land is available to meet the planned needs of the District Council for the next 5 years. The Council will require the phased development of sites listed under policies H4 and H5. This is to assure that the total planned provision is not exhausted in the early years; that an excessive amount of land is not made available at the outset; that a settlement is not swamped by over development and ensure the availability of infrastructure or adequacy of other services in a particular area'. There are other sites which would present greater opportunities to include the necessary provision of infrastructure resources to support increased housing provision in Whitchurch. This proposed development is a Housing estate which is not needed in Whitchurch at the present time. There are over 150 homes currently for sale in Whitchurch unsold. Where are the jobs, schools and services to sustain the influx population? With an ageing population what thought is being given to the shortage of bungalows? There are no substantive proposals for how this population increase might be sensibly sustained. For this reason I believe it should ideally be removed and withdrawn from Planning or at the very least the density, layout, plot size and house types be revised to ensure that MD2 policy requirements are met. The requirement for increased housing is inevitable but I believe that this should be managed and phased so that infrastructure and employment considerations can also be effectively planned for and achieved. I hope the Council will take the time and care to visit the site and consider the value of the open nature of this greenfield site and the impact such a development would have on our market town.

Q17: Do you wish to make another representation? No

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Q18: Please give the policy/paragraph/policies map details for your first representation relates to: *Respondent skipped this question*

Q19: Is your representation in support or objection? *Respondent skipped this question*

Q20: In respect of your representation on the policy, paragraph or section of the policies map do you consider that the SAMdev is: See guidance notes sections 1 and 2 for the meanings of 'legally compliant' and 'sound'. *Respondent skipped this question*

Q21: If your representation considers the SAMDev plan is not sound, please say whether this is because it is: (tick as many as apply) *Respondent skipped this question*

Q22: Please specify your reason for supporting or objecting. If you are objecting, you should make clear why the document is unsound having regard to the issues of 'legal compliance' or whether the document is not positively prepared, justified, effective or not consistent with national policy. *Respondent skipped this question*

Q23: Explain the changes you think should be made to the SAMdev Plan in order to make it legally compliant or sound. You should explain your suggested revisions to the policy, paragraph or section of the policies map and why this change would make the plan legally compliant or sound. Please be as precise as possible. *Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 6: Finally...

Q24: Do you consider it necessary to attend and give evidence at the examination? No, I wish to pursue my representation through this written representation

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Q25: If you wish to attend the examination please explain why you think this is necessary.

Respondent skipped this question

Q26: Do you wish to be notified of any of the following: (we will contact you using the details you have provided)

When the SAMDev plan has been submitted for examination	Yes
When the Inspector's report is published	Yes
When the SAMDev plan is adopted	Yes