

## AUGUST 2022 NEWSLETTER

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### The Local Plan

In a series of meetings at the end of last month, the Council took the decision to reject the inspector's request for additional sites to meet a housing target of 15,200 and stay with their earlier decision on a reduced number, which with various adjustments, now stands at 12,775 for the period to 2036 with 8,517 in the first ten years.

There was a lively debate at the special Council meeting on 26th July (link [here](#)) with the result depending on the casting vote of the mayor.

At the time of writing, council officers are informing the inspector of the decision and his answer is awaited.

The officers' advice to the Council was that the inspector could be expected to find the draft plan "unsound." We shall have to wait and see.

### Land to the north of Bradmore Way (BrP12a)

There is some good news – indeed very good news!

On 28th July, the Council's Development Management Committee refused permission for the proposed development on BrP12. The grounds of refusal included difficulties of access and lack of information, but essentially the development was refused as inappropriate development within the Green Belt for which there were no "very special circumstances" as required by the National Planning Policy Framework. The officers' report on the application and the committee members themselves were extremely clear on this point.

It is possible that the developer may appeal this decision and we shall stand by.

Meanwhile many congratulations to all of you who objected to this application – there were nearly 500 objections.

You can follow more detail through <https://www.bpplanning.co.uk/> the website set up by the action group.

Note: this site is not included amongst the Council's recommended sites for the local plan.

### **Upper Bell Lane (BrP1)**

The application for outline permission for 104 dwellings has still not been determined by the Development Management Committee. It is understood that the developer has indicated his intention to appeal the council's failure to determine the application in a timely matter and seek to have the matter determined by a planning inspector. We are on alert and standing by. Once again, congratulations to action group BLAG for their vigorous opposition.

Note: this site is not included amongst the Council's recommended sites for the local plan.

### **Land at Videne and Studlands, Hawkshead Rd. Little Heath (LHe4/5)**

This is another of the sites that have been considered by the inspector and found "sound". Without waiting for the adoption of the plan the developer, Cala Homes has announced a public consultation on a proposal for 63 houses, to take public reaction before lodging a planning application.

This site was originally proposed for 36 dwellings but increased to 63 following consideration of a change to the Green Belt boundary anticipated to take place with the adoption of the local plan – the correct procedure for changing the Green Belt boundary. While the plan remains unadopted the developer's proposal involves considerable development within the Green Belt.

The consultation will run online at <https://calaplanning.co.uk/littleheath/> until Friday, August 5th.

It is worth noting, as reported in our last newsletter, that the Council has awarded planning permission for 34 dwellings within the Green Belt on the adjacent site (LeH1/HS25)

Note: both sites LHe1 and LHe4/5 are included amongst the Council's recommended sites for the local plan.

## Meeting with Grant Shapps MP

Members of the NMDGBS committee met with Grant Shapps last month.

The society has met with Grant on several occasions in recent years as well as writing to him.

Grant has been very supportive of the need for lower numbers and has encouraged the council to resist the inspector's insistence on a target of 15,200. While welcoming his support, we reminded Grant that the target was derived from the government's own methodology and urged that this be changed to allow local councils to reflect the reality of available space in their boroughs. Grant said that he and other MPs were talking to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities but he was not hopeful for an early change.

We also raised the vexed question of the "five-year land supply", the technicality on which planning inspectors have granted appeals on planning applications for development within the Green Belt - as has occurred recently in Bullens Green. We argued that local authorities genuinely struggling to put together a local plan must be protected from this technicality which allows planning inspectors to override the local authority's objections to development in the Green Belt. Again, Grant is aware of the problem and will include this in his discussions with the DLUPHC.

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- If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us via the various means shown in the header of this newsletter.