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Iain Kemp, Programme Officer,  
Harborough Local Plan,  
16, Cross Furlong, Wychbold,  
Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire  
WR9 7TA

27th August 2018  
Respondent Ref. - ID: 1704

Dear Mr. Kemp,

## HARBOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031

In sending a copy of my submission dated the 30th of October 2017 to the Secretary of State for the Environment I also enclosed a copy of the first four pages of my submission on the HARBOROUGH CORE STRATEGY - PUBLICATION VERSION of October 2010. It was dated the 9th of November 2010. (See Enclosure A) At that time a Green Paper 'OPEN SOURCE PLANNING' had been published and I quoted a passage from the Executive Summary that appeared to indicate a resolve on the part of the Conservative Party to encourage public participation and social engagement:

To establish a successful democracy, we need participation and social engagement. But our present planning system is almost wholly negative and adversarial. It creates bureaucratic barriers rather than enabling communities to formulate a positive vision of their future development. Many local politicians and council officers have tried to make the current system work, but as power over planning has been taken away by Labour from locally elected representatives and given to bureaucrats in Whitehall and in regional government, so the mistrust of the planning system has grown along with an increase in protest and in the use of judicial review. It has not just been the planning system which has been a victim of this. Tragically, the very idea that development can benefit a community has also become a casualty.

The duration of the Plan was to end in 2026 and thereby we are now halfway through that 16 year period. The public is now being asked to comment on a LOCAL PLAN that extends through to the year 2031 and having examined the contents I have concluded that it is insufficient and lacking any clear appreciation of the many problems faced not only by the people of the Harborough District but also by the entire population of the county of Leicester. In short the PLAN represents an attitude of simply **GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS** and not setting out any coherent proposals.

My representations of the 30th of October 2017 dwell at length on the sad fate of the NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR BROUGHTON ASTLEY - THE BIG PLAN. My impression is that although it was the first such plan to be undertaken within the whole area of the East Midlands it was a sound proposal supported by a considerable majority of the local electorate. I know of no other such Neighbourhood Plan to have been completed within the Harborough District and I suspect that staff cuts within the Planning Department will have undermined any prospect of further proposals.

CONTINUED/

John Lloyd Marlow

Neighbourhood Plans are regarded by speculative developers as inimical to their interests and those of absentee landowners keen to make a quick profit. Along with other local residents I endured the Examination in Public on the Broughton Astley Big Plan conducted by the able Nigel McCurk on the 19th of September 2013. The proceedings were totally dominated by an aggressive assault on the Plan conducted by a bunch of 'men in suits' representing the interests of major developers, including David Wilson Homes, Davidsons, Crane Estates and William Davis. I realise that this local Plan process will again be dominated by the same bunch of developers and their noisy legal representatives when little progress will be made and no attention whatsoever will be paid to the needs of local communities.

### **THE PLANNING PROCESS:**

The previous record of the Leicestershire County Council and the seven District Councils in the field of Town and Country Planning has been poor. In 1969 it was ridiculous to choose the three small but neighbouring settlements of Broughton Astley, Primethorpe and Sulton-in-the-Elms to create the major residential development now known as the Key Centre of Broughton Astley. Key Settlement status came via the Local Plan of 2011 while the answer to the growing need for further housing development, particularly AFFORDABLE HOUSING, has been a hap-hazard pattern of unsuitable village infill development or major expansions of certain market towns, such as Lutterworth, where the ancient street layout cannot cope with a massive increase in traffic movement.

There is a chance that, if properly conducted, **THE STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN FOR LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE**, published in August 2016, could be the most appropriate way forward. The basic problem is the low level of leadership at elected member level, the multiplicity of administrative authorities and the lack of professional expertise at officer level. Seven District Councils, one Unitary District (Leicester) and an incompetent County Council is a totally inappropriate basis for addressing the serious problems now facing the people of Leicestershire. In August 2011 (see Enclosure B) I recommended the elimination of the County Council in favour of Leicestershire being administered by four Unitary District Councils. The recent bankruptcy of Northamptonshire County Council is likely to result in the creation of two Unitary District Councils and it is important to realise that Regional and Sub-Regional Planning can only thrive if there is a sound administrative structure in constituent authorities.

### **AVOID THE PAYING OF LIP SERVICE:**

I have quoted the Green Paper on 'OPEN SOURCE PLANNING' when an emphasis was placed on the importance of sustaining local community life. Every Local Plan that I have commented upon over the last twenty-five years has contained pious declarations about the vital importance of promoting and preserving a sound pattern of community life.

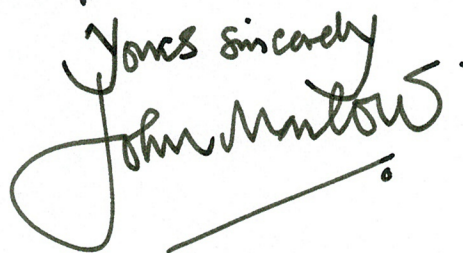
CONTINUED /

This Local Plan is no different. Page 2 of the 'Summary and Guide to Making Representations' contains a list of policies, including the alleged determination to **'PROTECT COMMUNITY FACILITIES, INCLUDING PUBLIC HOUSES, POST OFFICES, AND VILLAGE SHOPS'**. Notable for its absence within the list is the **LIBRARY**. In many communities the village library has been at the core of community life, particularly where there is no village hall or community centre. Harborough District and the County Council are Conservative administrations and it was significant that the Conservative manifesto for the elections of May 2017 contained no mention whatsoever of Heritage Services in the future, apart from a passing reference to having transferred 32 out of 36 libraries to community trusts.

When I moved back to Leicestershire in 2007 there were 53 public libraries across the county. In 2014 the County Council announced that only 16 were to remain as **KEY LIBRARIES**, while the remainder were to be transferred to community management or face closure. Now 14 of those Key Libraries, including the one at Broughton Astley face drastic reductions in the level of staffing. In October of this year the library will be staffed for only 16 hours in a week, a halving of the current level of **31** hours in a week.

● Paying lip service to the importance of policies directed towards the preservation and promotion of community life and then strip away those facilities by party political edict requires careful examination. As with other areas of public service, certain Acts of Parliament require the County and District Council to provide a service as a Statutory obligation with certain minimum levels of provision.

Strange though it may seem to some, library provision may have to be considered via the local Plan process, first to establish the size of that minimum level of provision and then to produce a fair and equitable pattern of distribution across the county.

Yours sincerely  


# HARBOROUGH CORE STRATEGY PUBLICATION VERSION OCT-2010

A

## 1-0 INTRODUCTION :

- 1-1 The following comments on the Core Strategy document are made by a 73 year old resident of Broughton Astley with no vested or commercial interest in the outcome of the District Council's deliberations and resultant policies.
- 1-2 The comments are also made in the context of the document as presented and the legislative framework within which the policy statements have been framed. Nevertheless, with a plan period stretching through 16 summers to the year 2026 it is reasonable to expect that circumstances will change and indeed the legislative framework may be the subject of very early change.
- 1-3 At a broader and more general level I understand that the Localism Bill will establish Local Enterprise Partnerships and place infrastructure decisions within the Planning Inspectorate with allied powers for local authorities. Also, consultative arrangements are imminent on what is termed 'OPEN SOURCE PLANNING' via a Green Paper prepared by the Conservative Party in advance of the General Election of May 2010. While hastening to add that the following words are taken from an introduction to the emergent Green Paper, it is useful to quote them at this juncture as so much will depend in the immediate future on the active engagement of residents within established communities :-

To protect our environment and improve our quality of life, we need a planning system that enables local people to shape their surroundings in a way that, while heeding global and national environmental constraints – carbon, biodiversity, landscape, heritage – is also sensitive to the history and character of a given location. But our present planning system, while offering some vital protections, imposes too many one-size-fits-all rules and inhibits communities from finding imaginative and sustainable solutions to the inevitable tensions between development and conservation.

To establish a successful democracy, we need participation and social engagement. But our present planning system is almost wholly negative and adversarial. It creates bureaucratic barriers rather than enabling communities to formulate a positive vision of their future development. Many local politicians and council officers have tried to make the current system work, but as power over planning has been taken away by Labour from locally elected representatives and given to bureaucrats in Whitehall and in regional government, so the mistrust of the planning system has grown along with an increase in protest and in the use of judicial review. It has not just been the planning system which has been a victim of this. Tragically, the very idea that development can benefit a community has also become a casualty.

[Executive Summary - Planning Green Paper: OPEN SOURCE PLANNING [www.planningconsultation.com](http://www.planningconsultation.com)].

- 1-4 My particular area of interest centres on the future of Broughton Astley and having been a resident for only 3½ years it is apparent that the village is not a hot bed of vigorous debate and social engagement. Local opinion would appear to be against Town Council status for Broughton Astley which I believe to be short-sighted and a regrettable mistake in the context of its justifiable elevation to the status of a Key Centre in the Core Strategy for the future.

CONTINUED:

1.5 It is dangerous to speculate, but the next 16 years may see changes in local government structure that will have an inevitable influence on the status and administrative powers accorded to particular local communities. Unitary District Councils are proliferating throughout the country, sometimes in a bid to reduce costs and the number of administrative tiers in local government. That process often goes hand in hand with a greater degree of delegated powers being accorded to existing and proposed Town Councils.

1.6 One important area of activity that does not emerge with any clarity within the Core Strategy is the broad issue of Public Health in the wake of substantial change within the operations of the National Health Service; i.e. the pattern of distribution, location and presumed catchment areas for General Hospitals, Community Hospitals and other all-important facilities at a more local level. Indeed, it is apparent, for example, that the people of Leicestershire are not well served in the availability of hospice accommodation and the location of such facilities (and their number) should be the subject of more active consideration when approaching patterns of future development for large settlements within the Harborough District.

I do believe it to be a fact that, for no good reason, District and Local Plans had dropped any consideration of the future location, extent and site area to be occupied by new hospitals. It is a mistake and a paradox when public transport within Leicestershire is so poor and when the stated intent behind strategy statements is to seek to avoid excess use of the private motor car.

## 2.0 THE VILLAGE PLAN FOR BROUGHTON ASTLEY, 1969:

2.1 It is a salutary experience to read the document published in December 1969 that was accepted by the Lutterworth Rural District Council and formally adopted by the County Planning Committee. At that time the main physical constraint on development was the liability of the brook to flood. Nevertheless, it was decided that the expansion of Broughton Astley would be planned in two distinct residential units with a combined and ultimate total population of 8500 persons, and where two independent shopping centres of equal importance could not be envisaged as a viable proposition.

2.2 Significantly, some consideration was given to the provision of an entirely new shopping area, midway between the two major zones of development, but owing to flooding problems a suitable site was not deemed to be available. The decision was therefore taken to locate the major shopping area at Primethorpe (Main Street) with the result being that the Davitt Way shopping area has always remained of minor significance despite the large area of residential development that now surrounds it.

2.3 There is no available evidence to suggest that any serious attempt has ever been made since 1969 to look at the whole development of Broughton Astley with the intention of dealing with the dispersed nature of major facilities that do exist and to improve upon a very poorly designed shopping area around Main Street, Primethorpe.

Unlike a traditional nuclear village form, the Parish Church is nowhere near the shops and pubs, library and health centre, providing an overall impression of haphazard development and a complete lack of focus for a large community.

CONTINUED:

2.4 It is not surprising that the 'ultimate population of 8500 persons', as envisaged in 1969, had already been exceeded by 2004, but with no discernible improvement in the range of facilities required to serve the needs of what is now a settlement with a population level on a par with that of Lutterworth (para. 6.44).

The report does acknowledge (para. 2.8) that the largest increases in population have taken place at Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Broughton Astley, "most notably at Broughton Astley where population growth since 1991 has not been matched by the provision of local services and amenities".

### 3.0 POLICY 16 : BROUGHTON ASTLEY

3.1 Sadly, it is possible to sum up the contents of pages 96-100 by saying that it is a bland recitation of the 'status quo', where no action is likely or intended within the 16 year period between 2010 and 2026. Certainly, there is no evidence to indicate that any attention will be given to a full and in-depth study of Broughton Astley where a careful strategy could be devised to restore some form of order and purpose to the random and fragmentary situation that now prevails.

3.2 At the very least, it should be possible to restore some kind of order to the mess that exists in Main Street, Primethorpe. The traffic pattern is poor, car parking and vehicular movement is badly regulated and acts as a stranglehold over the effective promotion of this area that was designated as the major shopping centre of 1969.

There is some potential for further development activity at Davitt Way, but the major defect is a complete lack of attention to the prospects for greater community cohesion through a careful analysis of site potential in the general area lying to the north and south of Cosby Road where it is bisected by the north to south route of Broughton Way.

3.3 IF POLITICIANS AT DISTRICT LEVEL, THEIR TRAFFIC ENGINEERS AND PLANNING OFFICERS HAVE FAILED TO TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS AND WHERE POLICY 16 INDICATES A FURTHER 16 YEARS OF INACTION, THEN SOME CONSIDERATION WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN AS TO HOW EFFECTIVE ACTION CAN BE INITIATED.

3.4 If its newly designated status as a Key Centre is of any real value, then there should be a clear statement of what the term 'Key Centre' does actually mean, and what steps will be taken to provide practical support to that designation. Within the text of Policy 16 it is stated that 300 dwellings will be permitted within the plan period. It is fair to say that there is no coherent plan for further housing development within Broughton Astley and it would be a mistake to allow piecemeal development over the next 16 year period. Urgent consideration should be given to the opportunity to form a central core development where a mix of uses, including housing, could be promoted. There is a woeful lack of sport and leisure facilities at Broughton Astley and that issue should also be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.5 Within Policy 16 (pages 96-100) there are several ritualistic references to Affordable Housing. (Policy 16 a and paras. 6.51 and 6.55). My fear is that all too often there is a great difference between AFFORDABILITY and ACCEPTABILITY. Too much lip service is paid to the creation of Affordable housing when so much of it is of a low standard. Indeed, much of the recent speculative housing in locations such as Lutterworth and Broughton Astley have been sub-standard in terms of space provision and simple measures to satisfy Energy Conservation requirements. This is a wide and very important subject area. I touched upon it in a recent letter to an officer of Harborough District Council and a copy is attached as Appendix A.

CONTINUED:

- 3.6 It is surprising that no major retailer has been attracted to Broughton Astley, given its population size and location. Maybe no clearly identifiable site has been an obstacle, but such a development could provide an important focus for other traders. Hence, there arises the question of effective promotion of a settlement and how it is achieved.
- 3.7 The apparent lack of effective consultation and public involvement is pervasive. One example can be cited in the area of NHS reforms where it has been decided to abandon Primary Care Trusts in favour of the commissioning of services on the part of GP consortia. The Orchard Practice at Broughton Astley is probably typical of local attitudes where no form of patient consultation exists.
- 3.8 To me, Planning should be an all-embracing and fully 'joined-up' process. Policy 16 merely represents an old-fashioned, out-of-date and two-dimensional approach to the Planning process. It is extremely unlikely that I will be around in 2026 for I would be in my 96th year, but it is my fervent hope that the District Council will see sense and pay due attention to the needs of Broughton Astley so that, by 2026 it is a much-improved and vibrant community.
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9: NOVEMBER: 2010.

B

www.harboroughmail.co.uk

**TEXT:**

Start your message with HBMVIEW and text to 84555

For anonymity will only be considered in exceptional cases. The editor reserves the right to alter or shorten letters.

# Eliminate county council

I WELCOME the news that a wholesale review is taking place of services at Harborough District Council.

May I suggest that all councils within the county should follow suit with the aim of eliminating the wasteful county council and replacing it with three new unitary councils.

South Leicestershire would comprise Blaby, Harborough and Oadby and Wigston district councils where existing headquarters buildings would become local centres for area-based services.

West Leicestershire would cover Hinckley and Bosworth plus North-West Leicestershire while Melton and Charnwood would unite to form a North Leicestershire Council.

At the same time more responsibilities could be delegated to town councils in order to improve the quality and direction of local services.

**John Marlow,  
Hobby Close,  
Broughton Astley.**

**"LUTTERWORTH MAIL,"  
4: AUGUST: 2011.**

**CITY OF LEICESTER**  
**329 839**  
(CENSUS OF 2011 TOTAL)

**48,300**

**205 800**

**157,500**

**190 500**

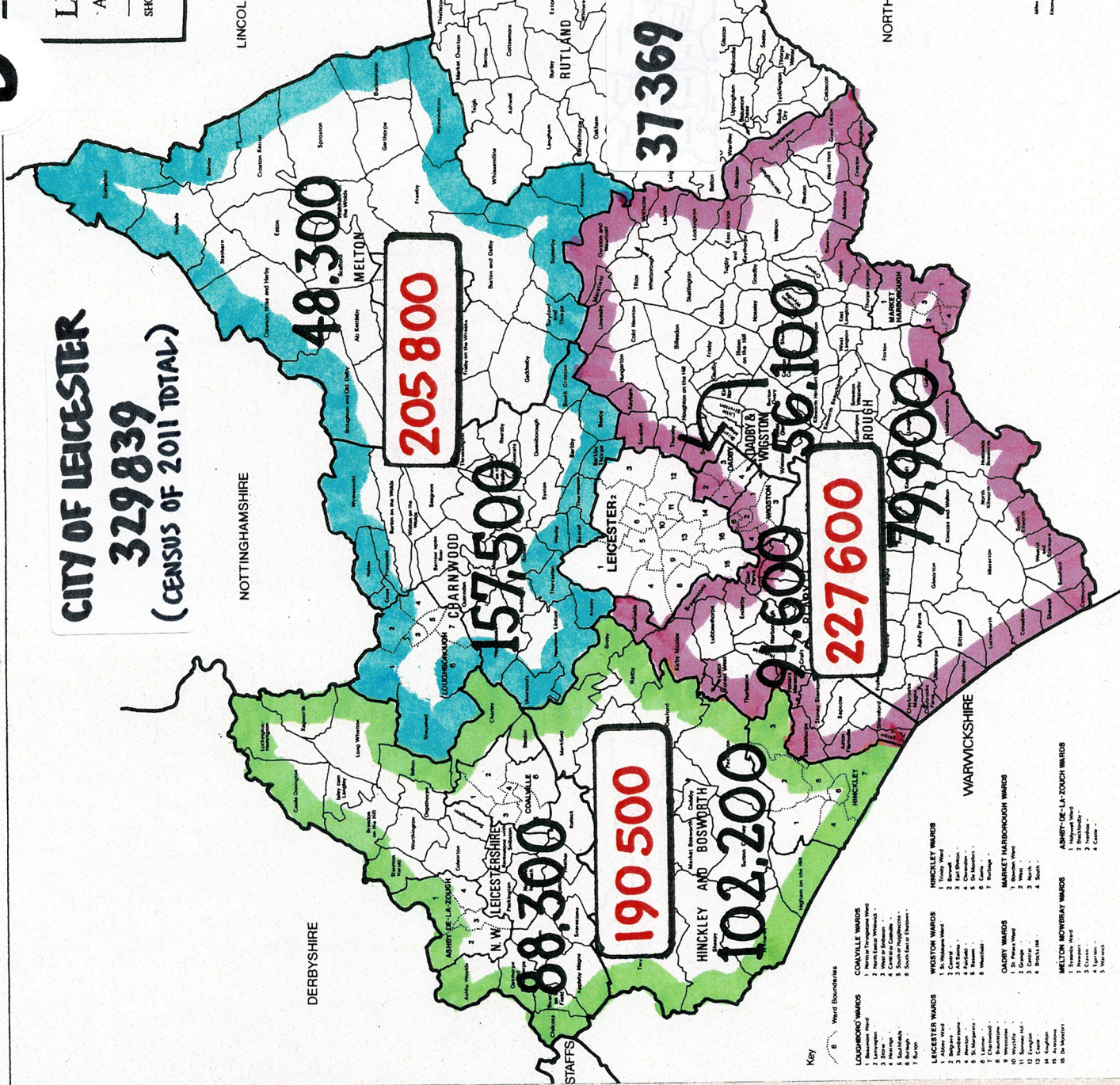
**102,200**

**91,600**

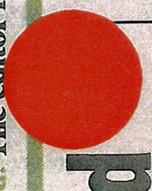
**227 600**

**79,900**

**37 369**



- Key**
- West Boundaries**
- LAUNDRON WARDS**
1. Leighton
  2. North Lepton
  3. South Lepton
  4. South Lepton
  5. South Lepton
  6. South Lepton
- LEICESTER WARDS**
1. St. Peter's West
  2. St. Peter's East
  3. St. Peter's North
  4. St. Peter's South
  5. St. Peter's North
  6. St. Peter's South
- COVINGTUN WARDS**
1. St. Peter's West
  2. St. Peter's East
  3. St. Peter's North
  4. St. Peter's South
  5. St. Peter's North
  6. St. Peter's South
- DAUBY WARDS**
1. St. Peter's West
  2. St. Peter's East
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- MELTON WARD**
1. St. Peter's West
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  5. St. Peter's North
  6. St. Peter's South
- MARKET HARBOUROUGH WARDS**
1. St. Peter's West
  2. St. Peter's East
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- ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH WARDS**
1. St. Peter's West
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Ian Kemp, Programme Officer,  
Harborough Local Plan,  
16, Cross Furlong, Wychbold,  
Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire  
WR9 7TA

3rd September 2018  
Respondent Ref: ID-1704

Dear Mr. Kemp,

HARBOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031  
**THE VULTURES GATHER!**

It appears that History is due to repeat itself. In my submission dated the 30th of October 2017 I referred to the farcical proceedings at the Public Examination stage of the Core Strategy Statement when "an irresponsible Government Inspector marched in and declared, without any explanation or justification, that at least 100 additional dwellings had to be absorbed (by the plan for Broughton Astley).

Enclosed are the minutes of the Planning & Licensing Committee of Broughton Astley Parish Council, held on the 2nd of July 2018. In attendance were Mr. David Bainbridge of Bidwells (a former Chairman of the East Midlands Region of the RTPI) and Ms. Helen Prangley of Davidsons Developments Ltd. The gist of their presentation was that the good people of Broughton Astley should prepare themselves for the prospect of a firm proposal for the development of at least 500-600 dwellings in order to wipe out any remaining open space separation between Broughton Astley and Dunton Bassett.

The Parish Council was also warned that "the Government's Planning Inspectorate would be issuing **NEW GUIDELINES** in October/November 2018 which could impact on our Neighbourhood Plan", etc. If this is true then the whole Examination process becomes a complete farce. The general public has had no notice of such a statement but it seems that the major developers are all too well aware of the situation and are suitably prepared.

● I recommend that either Mr. Bore categorically denies this statement by Mr. Bainbridge and the Examination proceeds on already established lines, or the whole procedure is immediately cancelled.

Yours sincerely  
John Marlow.

Copy to:- The Rt. Hon. Michael Gove, MP  
Secretary of State for the Environment  
Nobel House, Smith Square, London.

John Lloyd Marlow

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**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Minutes of the Planning and Licensing Committee meeting held on 2 July 2018  
at 7.30pm at the Village Hall, Station Road, Broughton Astley.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Stell, G Brown, R Patrick, M Swinfen,  
R Capewell, Mrs Hendy

**APOLOGIES:** None

**CLERK:** Mrs J Deacon

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** David Bainbridge, Bidwells  
Helen Prangle, Davidsons Developments Limited

**MINUTE NO.**

**1215.18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**1216.18 PRESENTATION BY DAVIDSONS DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**

Councillor Mrs Stell introduced the Planning Committee, welcomed David and Helen and asked that they present their reasons for attending the meeting.

David Bainbridge wished to take this opportunity of reintroducing Helen Prangle and himself. He confirmed they are looking to promote land for residential and commercial use and a plan was circulated showing the proposed area for development. He advised that initially it would be for 175 houses with a potential of between 500-600 houses within the 40 hectares but confirmed that they are aware that this land is in two Parishes

Councillor Mrs Stell stressed that the Parish has always had concerns with the access onto Dunton Road and it would not cope with additional traffic from 500+ houses.

Councillor Mrs Stell confirmed that the Parish is currently reviewing its' Neighbourhood Plan but confirmed that it wasn't amending the number of development sites agreed within its proposal 2013-2028 as the Parish had already built way beyond its quota.

She reiterated that the existing development sites had originally been agreed by consulting Parishioners, allowing them to decide where the sites should be and this area of the Neighbourhood Plan is not being reviewed. There is no intention of adding any additional development sites and residents would strongly oppose any further developments until 2028.

Harborough District Council's Proposed Submission September 2017 states *"Broughton Astley was first identified as a Key Centre in the 2011 Harborough Core Strategy with the aim of broadening its retail, service and employment provision. A neighbourhood plan has been made which identified suitable sites and planning consents are now in place for retail and employment uses. The neighbourhood plan also allocates more than enough housing land to meet its needs"*

David Bainbridge pointed out that the Government's Planning Inspectorate would be issuing new guidelines in October/November which could impact on our Neighbourhood Plan. He understands that as a Parish we might not be in a position to agree but advised that additional developments in the past had been successful in demonstrating how a Neighbourhood Plan can work. For example, it doesn't necessarily have to be housing, it can be education, community use, commercial, a local centre or could be used as creative thinking to procure land for a primary school. This is the opportunity to discuss issues going forward.

Councillor Mrs Stell advised the Parish is not at that stage yet but when we are we would look to invite all developers for consultation to engage with our residents by carrying out a further survey of what they felt the Parish requires.

Councillor Mrs Hendy also pointed out the District Councillors were strongly opposing any further developments.

**18/00959/FUL**

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Buncher

Location: 10 Lea Close, Broughton Astley, Leicestershire

Proposal: Erection of two storey extensions to front and rear, conversion of loft and installation of dormer windows and rooflights

1127.18 **RESOLVED:** Committee Members, after considering the plans, have the following concerns:

- a) that the size of the extension will have an overbearing effect on the street scene and will impact on neighbours;
- b) that daylight will be lost in the neighbouring property, number 11 Lea Close and possibly 121/123 Station Road;

This document is available in large print