

Lapworth Parish Council is pleased to see that several of its representations have been accepted as reasonable and incorporated into the latest version of the Local Plan. In particular:

1. that an increase of 62 dwellings is close to the 15% increase which is reasonable and proportionate for the settlement, as opposed to the previous near 40% increase possibility
2. that some of the sites, particularly the fields to the east of Station Lane, are of particular importance not just to local residents but also to visitors walking the canal and Baddesley Clinton driveway, as well as being of significant ecological, environmental and aesthetic value
3. that flooding concerns need to be recognised and addressed as appropriate, as in the Rising Lane sites

For these reasons the Parish Council welcomes the new version of the Local Plan as being a much improved reflection of the overwhelming view of parishioners about development, as described in the Parish Plan. It cannot do so wholeheartedly however, unless/until the following concerns have also been satisfied:

1. that the density of new dwellings remains at or below the envisaged level, i.e. the land made available has tight restrictions on the number of dwellings that would be given planning permission in each area
2. that all flooding concerns are tackled fully. This needs to start from understanding and resolving the existing causes of flooding in the Lapworth/Rowington boundary areas where existing properties and businesses are already flooded in severe storms. This needs to be done before embarking on any new builds which can only make the situation worse. It is of particular concern that Site 6 is adjacent to the high risk area according to the Environment Agency website; Site 1 is 50% within the high risk zone; and although Site 2 is outside it, it feeds into Site 1. The whole area requires serious hydrology mapping before any further development is permitted, as is acknowledged in the Local Plan.
3. that attention is given to protecting the view from the canal if the Meadow House and Kingswood Farm sites are developed
4. that construction is phased over the full period so that there is no sudden change to the village which would cause excessive stress on the existing infrastructure and facilities
5. that Affordable Housing should be suitable for the needs of locals primarily, either young people unable to afford starter housing in the area or older residents wishing to downsize. The Parish Council does not believe that Kingswood is generally suitable for affordable housing because there are few jobs here, the transport links to possible employment opportunities are poor, and the local facilities are expensive. We do not however object in principle to appropriate sorts of Affordable Housing
6. that the red/brown line drawn around the settlement is maintained as a very tight line so that the potential for further development within it is very limited
7. that confirmation is received that the land outside the red/brown line will remain unavailable for development for the duration of the Local Plan
8. that concerns are addressed about the effect on traffic and parking. The development of Sites 1 and 2 opposite Site 6 will lead to a crossroads, close to a blind canal bridge. Assurance is needed that all safety aspects have been considered carefully, and any implications for traffic-calming measures discussed with the residents before any Planning Permissions are granted.

Should Lapworth Parish Council receive satisfactory assurances about these points it would be pleased to welcome the Local Plan.

It needs to be noted that many of the new dwellings are set to be within the Rowington Parish Council's part of Kingswood, and Lapworth PC cannot comment on how they might view the Local Plan. Both Parishes are affected by the decisions however.