

:

16th May 2023



Mrs C Withington
Clerk, Audley Parish Council
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Dear Mrs Withington

Review of New Housing Target for Local Plan

I refer to your email dated 10th May from your Parish Clerk, following my previous letter to you on 6th February 2023.

We are currently at an advanced stage at preparing a draft Local Plan which will be considered at a Cabinet meeting of the Council on 6 June 2023.

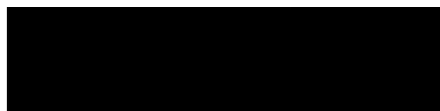
We are progressing a new Plan as the existing Development Plans are dated and, fundamentally, we have recently reviewed our housing supply position which now appears to be below the 5-year threshold that Government expects. This is lower than the current published figure for the Council. In view of this we are very vulnerable to having to grant development on sites where the planning balance will be tipped in favour of developers.

I appreciate that several Councils have halted their Local Plan, but we wish to take a proactive approach and allocate sites for residential development as well as key employment sites. We believe is the correct approach to take. We are also cognisant of the fact that the 5-year land supply includes a substantial element of student accommodation, and we need to find a mix of developments to meet our current needs. The Draft Local Plan will be at Regulation 18 stage, so we are seeking comments on the Plan at this stage before a final publication version (Regulation 19) is consulted upon before being submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination in Public.

It is the intention that the consultation period will be over 8 weeks which is a longer period than the statutory requirement. We therefore feel that this is the appropriate route to take and by the next stage we expect that Government will have published the results of the consultation you refer to in the form of a new Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A new NPPF will of course be the bedrock of any new planning policy going forward so the new Local Plan will need to be written to take into account the NPPF. This does not preclude us continuing with the Plan to seek views at this stage and will put us in a stronger position to have a new Plan adopted sooner than later which gives us greater certainty.

I hope this explains the position as it stands.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Hamilton
Chief Executive

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