

## **REFERENCE CONSULTATION ON THE PLAN FOR STAFFORD (SCHEDULE OF MODIFICATION) PUBLISHED IN 2014**

Sir.

I write as Chairman of the residents' committee 'Action Parkside' with regard to the above item. The lack of public involvement in the "Consultation" on the Main Modifications to the Stafford Local Plan has been so totally absent that Action Parkside, an active and involved local body, has been totally unaware of the new proposal for road(s) through the new residential estates immediately north of Parkside and of any consequential effect on the 'agreed' Urban Boulevard skirting our northern boundary on which we have been consulting for the past years.

On the basis of this lack of involvement, our view is that the consultation process must be deemed to be invalid as it stands.

At this late date, we request that the following comments be appended to the consultation responses already received, and forwarded to the inspector.

### **1. NOTIFICATION.**

We are very concerned that there seems to have been a quasi total lack of public knowledge of the changes proposed and it would appear that other than releasing this information ON LINE there seems to have been no attempt by the Borough Council to get in touch with or advise groups such as ours that these radical changes were being considered. Further, there have been no public displays where these changes could be commented upon. In short, there has been no effective consultation. We are aware that we are not alone in regard to the lack of information as it would appear that the local parish councils and other local groups were also unaware of these proposals, and it is only due to our relationship with the local parish council at Creswell that we are now aware that a number of those changes could have a major impact on the residents living to the north of Stafford.

### **2. NEW ROADS**

2.1. We are totally confounded by the fact that the newly proposed road would be running parallel to the dual carriageway 'Urban Boulevard' which is due to be constructed by Taylor Wimpey as part of the 106 agreement for the new Marston Grange estate. The new proposal seems to be totally unaware of this and would seem to make the new dual carriageway unnecessary.

2.2. We have always believed that the upgrading of Beaconside to a dual carriageway was part of the plan for the Eastern Distributor Road. We now note with concern that the land earmarked for this road in the area of Walton-on-the-Hill is no longer protected. What then has become of plans for an eastern distributor road? Such a road has great impact for those of us living at the start point of its projected line.

2.3. From what little information we are able to see, the new map would appear to include land further to the north and east of the original "plan", and includes a proposal for a NEW road to run directly from the A34 and then on to meet up with the Sandon Road to the east.

2.4. The new road is now shown to be connecting with the newly constructed employment park junction on the A34 and is much further south than any such road shown in earlier plans. What we find shocking is the fact that any new road on this alignment would effectively be running right through the middle of the new housing developments proposed for the coming years.

2.5. The map would also appear to have disregarded the fact that an area of common land to the north of the A513 has been included and is therefore an invalid inclusion as common land cannot be included within a local plan land allocation. It also appears to include land that, as far as we are aware, is still in private ownership.

2.6. In addition, it is indicated on the map that a “link road” running north to south from the “new road” is being put forward that in effect by-passes Marston Lane. This is the first time that any mention of such a link road has been suggested. We wonder whether the residents of Marston are aware of such ideas. This proposed road is shown as joining the A513 east of the junction with Common Road, failing to line up in any way with that junction. In effect, this will mean that there will be three junctions all within a short length of highway so creating a variety of opportunities for the installation of more traffic lights along Beaconside and creating a stop go situation that could and should be avoided.

2.7. If this new plan is accepted these three road junctions at Marston Lane, Common Road and the new road will be in addition to the already agreed plans for new road improvements and traffic light controls at;

1. Redhill roundabout.
2. Parkside Avenue (west junction) and Taylor Wimpey’s development (access one)
3. Taylor Wimpey’s development, (access two) which is already being built and
- 4 Parkside Avenue (east junction).

This will result in a total of seven sets of lights within approximately 800yds of highway, and that does not take into account the fact that further development is already taking place along the A513 at the MOD station, which in itself will create further traffic “stop/ go “ situations. All of this - in addition to the existing traffic lights along the A513 - will create a traffic nightmare.

2.8. There also appears to be a third access link indicated on the far side of what is now the Taylor Wimpey development but with NO explanation of what it is, or is likely to be. It is impossible to comment on, much less support such vague proposals.

2.9. Given that this new highway, if constructed will be passing through large residential estates, we are very concerned that they will be adversely affected by the large number of vehicles using it, in particular at peak times. The County Council's own estimates show a usage in excess of five thousand vehicle movements each weekday morning and evening. This is surely the sort of road which should not be proposed for residential areas with peak time traffic coinciding with the time of day when parents will be taking their children to and from school. The idea of heavy traffic flows does not fit well with encouraging more walking and cycling.

### 3. LAND ALLOCTATION.

3.1. It appears that, of the land allocated in the new plan and shown on the map coloured in grey, two areas are deemed to be “local centres and new Schools”. As nothing is specified, the following questions arise; is there to be a new secondary school or schools? Will there be a new primary school or schools. No comment can be made and no support given to such vague ideas.

3.2. A Local Centre is mentioned. What is it? Does it include shops, a supermarket, a filling station, a doctor's surgery, or community rooms? Once again, as there is no information on which to form an opinion, no support can be given.

### 4. PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS AND OUTLINE APPLICATIONS.

4.1. In view of the major changes implied in this schedule of modifications and the much greater impact they will have on local residents and businesses, we are of the opinion that all previous public consultations along with outline planning application exhibitions should be considered as being NO LONGER VALID, as the changes indicated have without doubt inherently altered the overall concept for the area by the proposed new highways infrastructure.

## 5. IN CONCLUSION

Given that there has been a lack of involvement with local groups and interested parties by the Borough Council and the fact that there is little or no information on which to form an opinion Action Parkside CANNOT support these proposals, and consider them to be unsound.

Gerald D'Arcy  
Chairman - Action Parkside

Tel. 07904 380760