

WRITTEN STATEMENT MATTER 7D – RADFORD SEMELE – RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL (1608)

DLH/YLC/

26th August 2016

Mr Ian Kemp
Programme Officer
Warwick District
Local Plan
16 Cross Furlong
Wychbold
Droitwich Spa
Worcester
WR9 7TA

Dear Sir,

**Warwick District Council's Local Plan
Consultation on modifications to the New Local Plan**

I refer to your circular letter dated 15th July 2016 inviting representations from my Parish Council in respect of the matters and issues identified by the Inspector. On behalf of Radford Semele Parish Council I set out a number of points to be made by them as their representations in this matter.

We have addressed our concerns with reference to the locality of Radford Semele – ie as an identified “Growth Village” under Matter 7d in the paper, and identified at Sites H38 and H52.

However, when the Inspector is considering other matters such as supply and delivery of housing land (Matter 3) and The Spatial Strategy (Matter 4) the sight should not be lost of the high impact upon a Village such as Radford Semele from an influx of a large amount of new housing.

In the light of the above the concerns of my Parish Council are as follows:-

1) Parish Council's concerns for the massive growth being imposed on the Village. Para. 1 outlines recent developments:-

1.1) Warwick District Council's initial New Local Plan highlighted Radford Semele as a growth village which should accommodate between 50-100 new homes

1.2) Radford Semele Parish Council collaborated closely with Warwick District Council and jointly approved the site H38 now under construction by Bovis Homes under Planning Application W/14/0322 for 60 homes

1.3) Arising from the Planning Inspector's decision to overrule WDC regarding the A C Lloyd Application W/14/0433 a further 65 homes were added.

1.4) At this point the Parish Council and local residents believed that the Village had met fully its contribution to the New Local Plan accepting a growth in housing of 16%. Subsequently however the following developments have occurred:-

1.4.1) Two further Planning Applications, W/16/0196 for 150 homes and W/15/1761 for 25 homes, both outside of the Village Envelope in the New Local Plan, have both been supported and approved by WDC on 25th April 2016.

1.4.2) A further application from Taylor Wimpey is imminent for 115 homes adjacent to the A425, opposite the Bovis development W/14/0322, following recent presentation to the Parish Council and visual presentations to Village residents by Taylor Wimpey.

1.4.3) In the New Local Plan, WDC has voluntarily further extended the Village Envelope, accessed via School Lane/Spring Lane, continuing from the A C Lloyd Site W/14/0433. This will allow for a further 60-100 homes. (This is the subject matter of this paper)

2) The Parish Council appeals for 'No further Housing Development' in Radford Semele.

2.1) The Parish Council accepts that Planning Approvals for the 300 houses representing a 38% growth in housing stock within the village cannot now be reversed.

2.2) A further 215 houses, representing 64% growth in total, are however in prospect which can be prevented, namely:-

2.2.1) Extension to Village Envelope from School Lane /Spring Lane, 60-100 homes

2.2.2) Taylor Wimpey site adjacent to A425 Southam Road, 115 homes.

(As this development, Para 2.2.2, is not yet subject to a Planning Application it is outside the scope of this enquiry. It does however need recording here as recent planning approvals demonstrate that other applications have been approved while WDC's New Local Plan and Five Year Supply of Housing Land are not in place.)

3) Summary of objections to:-

Extending the Village Envelope from School Lane /Spring Lane for a further 60-100 homes.

3.1) Radford Semele Parish Council submits, in this statement, the collective conclusions of directly affected residents living in the village.

3.2) School Lane provides the access road to Spring Lane which leads to the new A C Lloyd site which in turn leads to the proposed extension to the Village Envelope. School Lane also provides the access road to The Gardens, Hatherell Road, Hamilton Road and the various estate roads that lead from them. In all, there are more than two hundred and fifty homes whose residents naturally exit/enter the Village by using School Lane. This is set to increase by a further 65 homes when the A.C. Lloyd's development W/14/0433 is complete.

3.3) School Lane also provides the only access to the village primary school. The school pupils and their parents generate significant extra traffic at arrival and departure times during school terms.

3.3.1) Access to this site is via the narrow School Lane which has no scope for widening. Where School Lane exits on to Southam Road there is already serious traffic disruption at peak times. Local traffic surveys confirm that more than 1500 vehicles an hour pass the exit from School Lane at the junction with Southam Road. This traffic flow is continuously increasing caused by the new housing developments in Southam and the surrounding villages. Traffic tailbacks from Leamington on the A425 to Radford Semele are becoming a frequent event at peak times when people are trying to reach their place of work. The increased traffic, post the AC Lloyd development, will add to the access problem and extending the Village Envelope will further intensify the problem.

3.4) The extended Village Envelope extends, on its southern boundary, to a deep ditch which carries flood water from The Valley, Valley Road, Williams Road and the sloping land draining from the south east of the village. Serious flooding occurred to the southern end of the proposed extension to the Village Envelope in 1998 and 2006. The Envelope forms part of the flood plain and this continues to flood at times of excessive rainfall.

3.5) The western perimeter of the proposed extension to the Village Envelope extends closer towards the Leamington Spa/Whitnash boundary. It therefore encroaches further into the area previously protected by WDC as "An Area of Restraint" and later as a "Green Wedge" in order to avoid coalescence of the village with Leamington Spa.

3.6) The enlarged Village Envelope has significant impact on the landscape.

3.7) Warwick District Council previously opposed development on the A.C. Lloyd site at a three day hearing in January 2015. Important reasons given for rejection were:-

High impact on the village centre,
Coalescence with Sydenham Leamington Spa

Protection of the rural landscape.

3.8) It is important to recall that at that inquiry the National Planning Inspector walked to the Whitnash boundary to check the visual impact that the A. C. Lloyd development would have when viewed from the Whitnash direction. He had concerns but relied on new trees bordering the site, taking 15 years to maturity, to mitigate the impact. This choice would no longer be an option.

3.9) The Parish Council has several specific concerns:-

3.9.1) Protection from merging with Leamington Spa is vital to preserving the future separate identity of the village. Leamington Spa has already extended eastward to its ancient brook boundary. Protection of valuable agricultural land, providing a Green Wedge, in this attractive rural landscape to the south and west, with its interesting wild life is important.

3.9.2) Heavy construction traffic initially and then increased traffic in School Lane in the future will be a perpetual hazard for future generations of school children.

3.9.3) The extended Village Envelope borders the old spinney which is an interesting site for wild life including foxes, buzzards and many other varieties of birds. These will be lost. The nightly display of bats on summer evenings will also be lost.

4) In conclusion the Parish Council appeals to the inquiry to recognise the validity and importance of local opinion. It requests specifically that the proposed change to the Village Envelope, as considered above, is removed.

This change would allow the Village to maintain some of its rural character for the next 15 years rather than to grow to a population in excess of 3000 people.

The issues raised in this submission are those of the Parish Council as a whole and has been put together by the Chairman and myself.

Yours faithfully,

David Leigh-Hunt
Clerk to the Parish Council