**District Councillor’s Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC September 2021**

**Council Emails**

I continue to have issues with my council email, meaning there is often delays between emails being sent and my receiving them, so please if a matter is urgent do call me on the number below.

**Local Plan update**

On the 31st August the documents for the proposed Local Plan were released by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service governed by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.  The Local Plan sets out where development of housing and commercial sites are proposed to be situated during the planning period.  The current documents are out for consultation soon but give a clear indication of what is proposed by the administrations.  The following link will allow you to access the proposals and see where development has been proposed. <https://maps.3csharedservices.org/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a6742a84b6aa418f8b1e41315c2b8845>

The Council has gone through the for a call for sites and then Councillors and officers deciding which out of those proposed developments they want to include within the Local Plan. Ultimately the Council will have to come forward with a credible plan that will pass a planning inspectorate to show it delivers housing for growth within the Local Plan area. There has been consultation at each stage of the Local Plan process and now that the proposals have been put forward, Parish Councils and residents will be consulted again at this stage.

The proposed Local Plan will have huge impacts on the District and I am sure that all the parishes within the area will want to make comments on these proposals. As District Councillor, I will be raising several concerns regarding the proposals put forward.  My initial concerns are that around 48,840 houses are included within this Local Plan which is above and well beyond what the Government’s calculated need suggests. I also have concerns about the build out rates that are proposed due to the worry of how realistic they are and to be so reliant on them given build out rates are at the discretion of developers. It is also noted that the proposed developments within this Local Plan, especially those around the city, are very dense, cramming lots of houses into small spaces, this will have a big impact on communities and residents’ privacy in relation to garden space etc.

Water is also a concern given the existing pressures on chalk streams and water supply in our area. 48,840 houses using 80litres a day equates to over a billion litres of a water needed every year, if the house numbers were lower, the water demand would also reduce. This has already been challenged by councillors and the response has been it is for others to sort the water problem, but it seems unreasonable to pass the buck when so many more houses are being proposed. Requiring this amount of housing within the Local Plan with the infrastructure not being there is of great concern.  I have concerns about how growth has been calculated within the Local Plan given the methodology that has been used has not been used anywhere else before to our knowledge.

I really would like to encourage all residents and parish councils to make representation when the consultation opens, this document will have such an impact on our district. I have also requested that the way the consultation is completed and presented be reviewed given the difficulties some councils found in producing a collective response. Officers have agreed to take this away and look at making it more accessible for council responses.

**Five Year Land Supply**

The appeal I reported on previously was postponed and is due to be resolved heard on 21st October. Below is the link to the first appeal in case anyone would like to look at the sites that are being challenged.

[S/3873/17/OL | Application for outline planning permission for a residential development of up to 40 dwellings with some matters reserved except for Access Appearance Layout and scale. | Land At Mill Lane Sawston CB22 3HY (greatercambridgeplanning.org)](https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=ZZZY1NOITV814)

**2018/19 Accounts Audit**

I have previously reported on the delays to the auditing of the accounts, since my last report the External auditors of the council, EY, have given a report to the Audit and Corporate Governance committee on the 28th September, and gave a two week deadline for works to be complete, or they would consider using there statutory powers against the council, and a form of ‘special measures’ would be taken. I have repeatedly raised my concerns in relation to the progress of the accounts and the knock on affects that this causes in that we do not get to see how money has actually been spent until months and even years after the year end. This can not continue and it will not be easy for the council to catch up on the now several years of accounts to be audited. The administration needs to take this matter seriously and give the resources needed to complete the accounts which it has failed to do so far.

**Cllr Heather Williams**



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