

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**1 DECEMBER 2015**

**Motion from Councillors Gough and Skittrall**

**Re: Localism, Planning and Appeals**

Council Notes:

That a number of communities in this Borough have engaged positively in the planning process through the *Localism Act (2010)* by developing Neighbourhood Plans in order to provide a positive vision for growth in their community. Officers at this Council have contributed significant time and resource towards the emerging *North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy*. The Council also note the hard work of officers in developing the new *Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough* which seeks to provide a practical and positive vision for growth for the Borough.

However, there have been a number of examples in which decisions on planning matters made by this Council have been successfully challenged by developers despite significant opposition to them, as well as such appeals being in conflict with existing planning policies. Such examples include areas such as Earls Barton and Isham. There have also been a number of other appeals that have been successfully defended but where not all aspects of the appeal have been dismissed. For example, Bozeat and Irchester.

Council Believes:

That it is right that this Council positively plans for growth in order to provide for the housing needs of this Borough.

That the urban extensions of Stanton Cross and Glenvale Park at Wellingborough North are key components in a positive growth agenda for Wellingborough. It is also right that the villages of this borough should have a certain level of development, but such need should be identified and delivered with the support and input of local communities.

That the current rate of house building within the Borough is not constrained by a shortage of land with planning consent.

Planning appeal decisions such as those in Earls Barton and Isham threaten the Borough's Plan led approach, and as a result undermine the Government's policies of Localism and Neighbourhood Planning.

Although there is a need for local Councils to have land available for development that can be consented and built on, the five year land supply as defined in the *National Planning Policy Framework* cannot be fully controlled by local authorities, and can be hampered by developers who either refuse to build or are unable to build for various reasons.

Council Resolves:

To write to the Members of Parliament for Wellingborough & Daventry to express this Council's concerns on the following issues:

- Lack of Local Accountability in planning appeal decisions.
- The faults in the current definition of a five year housing supply.
- The potential of planning appeal decisions to undermine emerging Neighbourhood Plans, and therefore that such appeals should not be decided when plans are at an advanced stage and certainly not when a Neighbourhood Plan is awaiting a referendum or a Local plan is awaiting an Examination .

To ask for a meeting between a delegation from this Council and Ministers at DCLG to highlight these concerns and ask for a review into these matters.

Proposer: Councillor Robert Gough

Seconder: Councillor Brian Skittrall