

31/07/2012

Attention Donna Hall Chief Executive

As chairman of the above forum I have attended and spoken at all the meetings held by the government inspector involving Lowton East

His first concerns were that four sites were identified, although the council only needed to use one. He wanted the one site to be identified and the others removed. At this point assurance was given that only 600 houses were to be built in Lowton.

We understand that we will have to accept some building and this seemed a reasonable amount.

We complained to the inspector that the Council had failed to fully consult with the public on this matter. Your head of planning claimed that they had. However Mr William Adamson who owned one third of the land at Pocket Nook they are trying to use knew nothing about it.

He has since written to the council complaining and asked for his land to be removed from the core strategy. He is not prepared to sell it to developers.

I attach a copy of Mr Adamson's letter for you to read.

Your planners have stated that they need to build in Lowton East to get the development money and spend it in the Hindley area.

Under the latest planning laws issued by the Government, development money should be spent in the area where the building takes place. We will look to claim this money for Lowton East.

I attended the cabinet meeting where Mr Normanton presented his latest plan. I was shocked by his statement.

He told cabinet that the Inspector had asked planning to look at other areas for the extra housing land that he felt was necessary. This included Standish-Wigan-Leigh and even green belt release. He also instructed that a full consultation should take place on all possibilities. Mr Normanton attitude was to look to consult in all areas but he claimed that the only area that would fit into the original core strategy was Lowton; he claimed that to try any other area would see the inspector reject the core strategy.

The reason the inspector asked for other areas to be considered was that he felt to build 2210 houses in Lowton would be too much for our area to take.


To put this in perspective Lowton East consists of some 5000 houses

So why the inspector would ask for other areas to be considered then reject the core strategy if they were is beyond me. It seems to me that your planners are set on destroying Lowton.

We consider your past and planned consultation to be lacking, people are not aware of what is going on.

Therefore we request the council hold a referendum, by writing to all the residents of Lowton East explaining your proposed plans and asking them to vote for either acceptance or rejection.

Edward Thwaite

  
Chairman



Mr Thwaite  
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Your reference:  
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Date: 15 August 2012

Dear Mr Thwaite

### **Wigan Core Strategy – Golborne and Lowton**

I have been asked to respond to your letter to the Council's Chief Executive, Donna Hall, dated 31 July 2012, in which you raise a number of points.

The first issue you raise is about the amount of development or the number of sites. The Council has not, at any point, given an assurance that only 600 houses or one site would be built in Lowton. The Draft Core Strategy states (paragraph 8.27) "From with the East Lancashire Road corridor a site or sites will subsequently be identified and allocated in a future development plan document." There were 4 broad site options, in Golborne, Lowton and Astley. The council's proposed modification in January this year referred to 600 houses (dwellings) but it also stated that if less than 80% of the housing requirement across the borough had been delivered by April 2019, "an additional site or sites will be allocated within the broad location". Regardless, this proposed modification has no particular status as it has not been accepted by the Inspector.

The second matter you raise is about the consultation undertaken. The original consultation on the proposed broad location for new development at the East Lancashire Road corridor was from 19 October to 30 November 2010. As well as contacting everybody already on our consultation database, we wrote to all properties adjoining the 3 broad site options in Golborne and Lowton (over 900 addresses). We also posted 12 site notices: 4 around 'East of Stone Cross Lane'; 5 around 'Pocket Nook' (4 on the A572 Newton Road and 1 on Pocket Nook Lane) and 3 close to 'Rothwell's Farm'. We also issued press releases that were featured in the local press. All of these advertised 2 drop-in sessions with planning officers, one in Lowton in late October and one in Golborne in early November. Finally we extended the consultation period from 30 November to 31 December to give people longer to submit their views.

You also refer to Mr Adamson at Carr Lane Farm. We did write to Carr Lane Farm in mid-October 2010 as part of the wider mail out. More recently we have contacted Mr Adamson by telephone and discussed the position with him.

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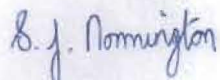
The next matter you raise is about development funds. The policy in the Draft Core Strategy (paragraph 8.28) does refer to "capturing a substantial share of the development value" for the east-west core. However, the infrastructure implications and requirements of development locally would have to be resolved first before funding could be used more widely. You refer to the Government's planning laws. The Government's intention for the community infrastructure levy is not that it should all be spent in the area where the building takes place, but that a "meaningful proportion" should be. That would undoubtedly be the case if development comes forward in Golborne and Lowton so far as it can be levied.

You also refer to the council's ability to adopt the Core Strategy. It is the case that if a major change is needed in order to make the Core Strategy sound, it will have to be withdrawn for further work and consultation before it is published again as a Revised Draft Core Strategy. It would then be subject to another public examination. It is a matter of degree what a major change is but the designation of broad locations for new development in areas where they would not accord with the Draft Core Strategy as submitted, would be a major change.

Finally, in the current national system and legislation, local planning is not determined by referenda but by evidence at public examination, including evidence submitted by the public.

I trust this information will be helpful.

Yours sincerely



**Stephen Normington**  
Director of Economy