

16th October 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Neighbourhood Plan. I think ecological matters have not been fully considered and so I must object strongly. It is perhaps understandable that the most important issue facing humanity is overlooked when there are so many procedural details that cloud modern decisions. Nevertheless, there appears to be some important factors which have not been considered.

I understand that Barrow must accept a target of 170 houses and this seems reasonable given the UK's housing crisis. It is, however, illogical for the Plan to allocate such a large site which could potentially fit many more houses. Not only does this unnecessarily destroy a greenfield site, it reduces the amount of highly productive agricultural land in the UK. The consequence would be to import the lost harvest from overseas thus increasing the carbon footprint of our food. The site is also more distant from the A14 and not served by any public transport. The result will be that this site will produce more CO₂ from traffic than others which are either better served by public transport or are closer to the main road network. This will be exacerbated with the inclusion of a care home since the effect will be that residents are either more isolated or they and visitors will need to travel by car. The site is also the closest site to Wilsummer Wood which is designated as a county wildlife site. Whilst buffer distances have been maintained, the site's large size and proximity to a wildlife site will have a deleterious effect on Barrow's wildlife.

The inclusion of an employment area in to the site is also illogical. Question 16 of the PC's questionnaire shows that 81% of parishioners felt that Barrow had sufficient business premises. Also, Barrow already has an underutilised employment area near the church; a recently allocated area for a business park near the school and I believe there is planning permission for commercial buildings at Barrow Hall and at Barrow Hill.

I was impressed by the thoroughness and professionalism of the reports by Aecom. The decision to ignore these - without any clear reason - and decide on a much larger site seems illogical. The Aecom report shows that the Barrow Road and Denham Lane sites are the most sustainable. I like the Bury Road site's use of a nature area which includes ponds as this will encourage Barrow's great crested newts. Also, the site is well served by public transport with a number of bus stops close by which are absent from the preferred site. The bus service in Barrow is poor but if more people were to use the bus, because of conveniently located bus stops, this would encourage a better service as it is more attractive for the bus companies.

I prefer the Bury Road site alone to meet the housing target. If not practical, then the Denham Lane site is more sustainable than the Neighbourhood Plan's site. I do not believe it would cause coalescence with Denham End as there is no settlement boundary for Denham.

Yours sincerely,

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PC15

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I wish to object strongly to the Neighbourhood Plan.

I had previously felt that development in the southern part of the village would be most preferable, but I am persuaded by the very thorough and professional reports from Aecom that this is not as sustainable as development in other, more central parts of the village.

I cannot see a good reason why the PC has ignored Aecom's reports and chosen a less sustainable site – it simply does not make sense.

I am informed that if the Barrow Hill site is developed, the landowners will provide a new sports field at Barrow Hill. If this is the case, why is it not included in the Neighbourhood Plan? How will they play football on a hill? Besides, I do not think we need a new sports field – we have one already and it is not used that often. It would be better to improve the sports field and village hall that we have rather than using more land to build a new one.

The Barrow Hill site will cause too much traffic through the village.

We do not need any more offices or industrial units. I believe there is already planning permission for an industrial park north of the school. Since this would be close to the A14 this is a sensible location, rather than having lorries and HGVs traffic pass through the village and past the school where there would be an obvious safety hazard.

I think it's a cruel idea to put old people's homes in such remote locations. It would more sensible to locate old people's homes near the centre of larger villages or towns where the elderly are less isolated and could enjoy easy access to shops etc.

The site is not served by public transport.

The site would be highly visible from a surprisingly long distance. I was near [REDACTED] recently and the site is visible from there, spoiling a beautiful view. I think this may be missing from Aecom's environmental report because the lines of sight are not obvious.

I have seen information from Bloor Homes regarding their site at Bury Road and I think this is a much better site because it is smaller and closer to shops etc. in the centre of Barrow. It is also close to the A14 and closer to public transport.

The division between Barrow and Burthorpe is illusory. One has only to walk along Bury Road to see that there is already no discernible difference or gap between Burthorpe and Barrow. Besides, the Bury Road site is to have an open area along most of its boundary with Bury Road which means that any threat of coalescence is negated.

The Denham Lane site is only for about 20 houses and the location would not impact Denham (which I believe is classed as countryside rather than a settlement).

The PC's inexplicable decisions may have something to do with the appointment of Turley who I understand work for the landowners of the site at Barrow Hill. This seems highly irregular since they are unlikely to offer wholly independent advice to the PC.

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[REDACTED]



14th October 2023.



Dear Sir/Madam,

PRIVATE. Public Consultation on Barrow-cum-Denham Neighbourhood Plan

I would be obliged if you might consider the following comments on the above.

This plan is based on procedural impropriety and is therefore unsound. The PC Vice-Chair has lodged a public declaration of her interest regarding land at Barrow Hill however she has not declared her interest regarding her relationship with other landowners in the plan's selected site. Second, the PC Vice-Chair did not declare her interest at relevant PC Meetings where agendas show that her land would be subject of discussion. Third, the PC Vice-Chair joined a planning sub-committee where she received material that other landowners did not. Fourth, the PC Vice-Chair took minutes and seconded minutes of PC Meetings where she had a declared interest. Fifth, the PC's chosen consultants (Turley) have acted for the PC Vice-Chair and other landowners to promote the land to West Suffolk during development of their local plan. Sixth, Turley continue to act for the owner of land in the preferred site.

Declarations and conflicts of interests are, of course, a normal part of working life and are usually dealt with in an open, transparent manner. The neighbourhood planning process at Barrow-cum-Denham PC falls well short of what might reasonably be expected.

I do not wish my comments to be publicly attributable.

Yours faithfully,

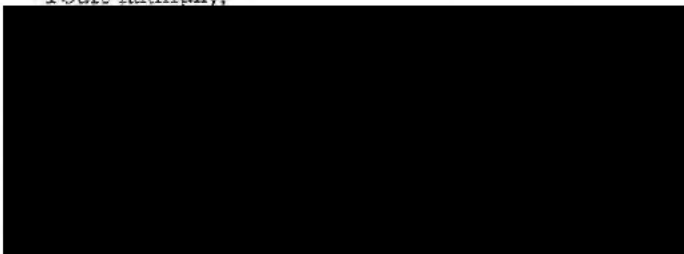


Barrow Parish Council Public Consultation

I disagree with the Neighbourhood Plan because:-

- ☐ The site excessively large. An employment area in addition to the one near the church is not needed because:
 - a site for Barrow Business Park near the school is already allocated
 - West Suffolk have already granted planning permission for large offices at Green Farm Barrow Hill (DC/18/0252/FUL) & Barrow Hall (DC/20/1396/FUL)
 - office space is not in demand due to home working.
- ☐ The site will generate too much traffic through the village. The PC's questionnaire shows that traffic in Barrow is an important issue. Of all the sites, Barrow Hill will generate most traffic through the village as it is furthest away from the A14, A11, train station and the school.
- ☐ The PC have not fought for the parish's preferred location north of the village and have not made appropriate representations to West Suffolk Council regarding the settlement boundary.
- ☐ The PC's preferred site is considered not as sustainable as Denham Lane or Bury Road by AECOM. A convincing reason to select a less sustainable site has not been provided. Since only 4 councillors voted for the preferred site the decision looks highly questionable.
- ☐ The 5Ha of sport & recreation facility has been suggested by Pigeon, however the PC's own questionnaire is evidence of low demand for additional sports & recreation facilities. Clearly, this was offered as an enticement but this is now absent from the Plan.
- ☐ Site selection process was unfair. The PC Minutes of Nov. 2021 show that important data was handed data to Councillor Steer, who owns part of the preferred site, but not to other landowners.
- ☐ Denham Lane site has wrongly been dismissed by the PC. It simply does not coalesce with Denham as it is too long and thin to cause coalescence. The site was assessed as highly suitable by AECOM.
- ☐ The Bury Road site has been wrongly assessed. The site plans for Bury Road show a large open area at the north east of the site, thus mitigating any threat of coalescence. This has been missed or ignored by the PC. AECOM's assessment of the site's historical impact and accessibility contains factual errors. When these are corrected, the site's superior sustainability ranking over Barrow Hill will be boosted still further.
- ☐ Development at Barrow Hill may be in addition to sites in West Suffolk's Local Plan but this information is excluded from the consultation. This demonstrates a lack of transparency by the PC.
- ☐ Turley have written the Plan but they have also done lots of work for the landowners. Importantly, they have worked for Pigeon & Cllr. Steer to promote the land at Barrow Hill to West Suffolk. Turley would naturally want to protect the commercial interests of a major client. The use of public funds to pay a non-independent consultant reflects poorly on the PC.
- ☐ Due process has not been followed with regards to declarations of councillors' interests; the handling of Neighbourhood Plan information to Councillors who are also landowners; not agreeing policies before site selection; the use of personal preference rather than evidence in voting and the use of non-independent experts to write policies.
- ☐ In summary, the development of this Neighbourhood Plan is extremely lacking. The resulting Plan is not based on evidence and is contrary to the PC's own data from parishioners. This reflects badly on the PC and the Chairman and Head of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee should resign.
- ☐ West Suffolk Council's emerging Local Plan is much more preferable for Barrow.

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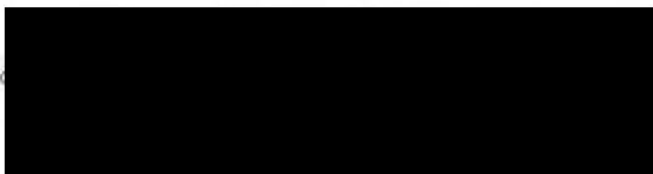


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Re: Barrow-cum-Denham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

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Question 28 shows that only 7.8% felt that residential (care) homes were needed. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by proposing a care home in addition to more business premises and 170 new houses.

Question 31 shows that 71.2% felt they would like to see minimal development in Barrow-cum-Denham in the next 10 years. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by proposing a site with 170 houses plus an employment area and a care home. Also, the Neighbourhood Plan allows for conversion of the site to housing which would mean many more houses than the minimum of 170 houses.

Question 32 showed that 54.7% felt that any development should be in the north west quadrant of the main settlement. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by proposing a site in the quadrant which is literally opposite this area.

Question 33 showed that the most frequent reason for preferring a particular quadrant was traffic/transport. Of these 85% had preferred the north west quadrant because it was close to transport links, close to main commuter routes or close to A14. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by choosing a site which is the furthest away from the transport links and, as the site is not served by public transport, this would cause a big increase in traffic through the village.

Question 41 shows that an average of 97.5% agreed or agreed strongly with the environmentally protective statements in Questions 34 to 40. The Neighbourhood Plan has chosen an excessively large greenfield site which is also close to Wilsummer Wood.

The Neighbourhood Plan has also ignored the reports which show other, smaller sites as more sustainable and suitable, without giving a good reason.



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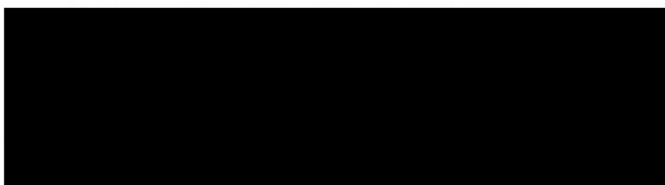
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Question 33 showed that the most frequent reason for preferring a particular quadrant was traffic/transport. Of these 85% had preferred the north west quadrant because it was close to transport links, close to main commuter routes or close to A14. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by choosing a site which is the furthest away from the transport links and, as the site is not served by public transport, this would cause a big increase in traffic through the village.

Question 41 shows that an average of 97.5% agreed or agreed strongly with the environmentally protective statements in Questions 34 to 40. The Neighbourhood Plan has chosen an excessively large greenfield site which is also close to Wilsummer Wood.

The Neighbourhood Plan has also ignored the reports which show other, smaller sites as more sustainable and suitable, without giving a good reason.



A cross indicates that I do not wish my comments to be publicly attributed to me.

To: Barrow Parish Clerk
From: The undersigned
Date: 16-10-23

Re: Barrow-cum-Denham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

Please consider the following as a strong objection.

The reason for my objection is that the Neighbourhood Plan contradicts the evidence in the PC's Report on Responses to Questionnaire dated October 2020.

I welcomed the PC's approach to gathering information from the village using the questionnaire but am now appalled that it has been so overwhelmingly ignored.

Question 16 shows that 81.2% strongly agreed or agreed that Barrow-cum-Denham has sufficient business premises. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by proposing even more business premises than the additional ones already in the planning pipeline.

Question 28 shows that only 7.8% felt that residential (care) homes were needed. The Neighbourhood Plan has ignored this by proposing a care home in addition to more business premises and 170 new houses.

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17 October 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

Subject: neighbourhood plan

Please accept this letter as feedback in to the neighbourhood plan consultation.

I own property in Barrow and am a former resident. I plan to move back in the coming months.

This consultation does not make it easy for people to express their views. The web-site crashed when I tried to submit my comments and there is no email address provided on the flyer. Only one flyer has been provided per household and other than one post on social media some weeks ago, publicity seems to have been kept worryingly low key. Other people in Barrow share my concerns and frustrations. I recently learnt that Pigeon are a major client of the neighbourhood plan consultants, Turley, and so I am unsurprised that honest feedback is made unwelcome. Hence, a good old fashioned letter which I hope you will add to comments from other parishioners.

Anybody living in Barrow will know that the vast majority do not want to see Barrow become a town. We would like it to remain a village. My property is on the edge of the village and backs on to green fields - I'd like it to stay that way. I am lucky to be in the position of being fairly unaffected by any of the plans for new housing sites but I am concerned by excessive growth of the village.

At the same time, I understand that the UK faces a housing crisis and so I agree that Barrow must accept its fair share of new houses. I have been told that the housing target is 170 new homes. This does not seem unreasonable when compared to other villages like Kennett.

What does seem unreasonable is that the parish council are proposing to develop such a massive site which will not only have 170 houses but also a care home and a business area. I believe the parish council have been informed by West Suffolk that the neighbourhood plan housing will be in addition to planned developments at Bury Road and Denham Lane. This should have been made very, very clear in the consultation.

Why on earth would the parish council think that Barrow residents would want to see such excessive development? One possible answer is that they have been advised by Turley.

The preferred location for any new housing would be near the school, towards the A14 so that traffic through the village is kept to a minimum. That site would seem ideally suited to allow expansion of the school and improve traffic safety problems at school drop off and pick up times. In other words, ideally north of the village NOT south as proposed by the neighbourhood plan.

Locating such a large site to the south of the village will mean that much of the traffic will come through the village, past the school to or from the A14. This is a bad idea.

At least the traffic from Bury Road will not be so bad because the site is much smaller, some traffic will naturally go down Bury Road (which is rarely busy) to Bury and there are 2 bus stops there.

I also see that the proposed site is close to Wilsummer Wood. I believe this is a protected habitat and so it seems a bad idea to build so close by. Bury Road is much more distant and I am not aware that there would be any impact on protected habitats. I note that Bloor Homes are planning a wetland nature area which seems like a very positive idea.

The use of Turley as consultants demonstrates poor judgement by the parish council. I suggest that Turley have deliberately presented a long winded and overly complicated document on the basis of 'bullsh*t baffles brains'. It will be beyond many of the old folk to read and understand a 100 page document written in such an unhelpful fashion. If Pigeon are a major client then common sense should tell the parish council that Turley will be influenced by commercial pressure. One aspect of this would be to discourage feedback. Parish funds should only have been spent on a wholly independent consultant.

In conclusion, I strongly disagree with the neighbourhood plan. It is plainly a bad plan, poorly publicised, poorly presented and biased towards the landowners not the parish.

Kind regards,



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