

LLANDAFF SOCIETY: NOTE OF LDP OPEN FORUM HELD AT ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE, LLANDAFF: 11 NOVEMBER 2013

Background:

1.1 GB-G (Llandaff Society Chairman, and Forum Chairman) and KP (Society Planning and Conservation Advisor) summarised the background as follows: *The Deposit LDP is out to consultation. Cardiff Council is holding consultation events, but Llandaff Society decided to hold this one for people living in Llandaff. Development will go ahead without it - it is better to have an imperfect Plan than none.*

1.2 *The Society held an Open Forum in December 2012 and submitted a consultation response - response and note of Forum on the Society's web-site.*

1.3 *The Society is working with Radyr and Morganstown Community Council, their transport consultants TPA, Pentyrch Community Council, St Fagan's Community Council, and Radyr and Morganstown Association as the "North West Cardiff Group"*

1.4 *At Deposit stage the key issue is whether or not the Plan is "sound". If - as we think - the Plan is not sound we need to propose ways to mend it. We have to be specific, we can't say simply "it needs to be improved". The Plan is supported by voluminous documents - all are on the web.*

1.5 *Graham Walters barrister of Civitas has given us pro bono advice - for which we are most grateful - that the LDP fails the 'soundness' test on the following grounds:*

- i. the transport strategy cannot provide sustainably for the scale of development proposed in North West Cardiff;*
- ii. the housing is unlikely to be delivered in the 13 years remaining of the current plan period, and could well result in an unsustainable pattern of development; and*
- iii. the plan's details on new infrastructure required by the scale of development envisaged are vague and provide no certainty of delivery.*

Also:

- iv. the apparent reliance on bus rather than rail transport does not solve the existing, let alone future, road problems; and*
- v. the Conservation Area Appraisals should be identified on the list of Supplementary Planning Guidance.*

1.6 *Because there hasn't been a new Plan for many years the housing requirement is now very large. In current economic circumstances it is very unlikely that the 2,300 homes per year implied by the figure will be built by 2026. Sites could be cherry picked and new developments without employment, local facilities or services (schools, community halls, bus services) and hence left to rely on those in adjacent*

areas. Some landowners may submit planning applications in advance of the LDP being adopted.

1.7 A key problem is existing congestion with slow moving traffic for 6 plus hours a day. This leads to poor air quality - Cardiff Rd is 1 of 4 Air Quality Management Areas in the City. The route through Llandaff is used by 22,000 vehicles a day (24 hr 2 way flow). The LDP needs a 50/50 modal split to work, but Cardiff Council hasn't shown how the switch to "sustainable" modes (from 39% to 50%) can be achieved. Nantes, our twin city - and currently European Green Capital - achieves a much better modal split than this, but has been pursuing an integrated plan, involving heavy investment in reviving its tram system as well as providing cycleways.

COMMENTS

2.1 Comments from those present (home location in brackets) *responses in italics*:

(Pwllmelin Rd) There have been traffic problems in Llandaff for 40 years. One solution would be to use the space over the Waterhall branch at high level, running the new track through the former Ely Paper Mill site.

(Insole Estate) Will there be adequate provision for schools at all levels? There is great anxiety about whether there will be adequate public transport for this scale of development. The tram train idea is attractive but many people come from the Valleys, and whereas the focus for commuting used to be the City Centre, employment is now spread across the City. *Schools will only be built when a critical mass of housing has been reached and there is funding. Until then children will go to schools in existing areas. Electrification of the Valleys Lines and South Wales Main Line will help improve journey times and capacity by the end of the decade, and there'll be new rolling stock. For cross-city journeys interchanges are needed - one at Waungron Road is a possibility - but buses running on all-vehicle roads will be subject to increasing levels of congestion.*

(The Green) Aren't tram trains inflexible? *The rail track bed still exists from Waterhall to Creigiau and beyond - this could be used as a segregated busway, with buses using roads elsewhere. Tram trains are less expensive and more flexible than heavy rail and could run on street after Central Station, but there is no definite proposal as yet. The faster the public transport the more likely people are to use it rather than their cars.*

(Danescourt) The current traffic though Llandaff is below capacity of a single carriageway because of obstructions. There are problems of high levels of particulates as well as nitrogen dioxide.

(Danescourt) Whatever transport strategy is adopted it needs to be in place **before** houses are built. Where will the money for implementing it come from? In Edinburgh the tram system has virtually bankrupt the City Council. *The Welsh Government has new borrowing powers, and as in England they could fund*

infrastructure via loans with income streams from landowners (via CIL) used to repay as development proceeds.

(Danescourt) There's a need for employment uses to be included close to the new housing and for new local centres, so that not everyone has to travel to the City Centre. Government used to take deliberate steps to decentralise jobs including to the Valleys, because housing costs there are more affordable. *Companies are more likely to move to Newport. Admiral located in Cardiff rather than elsewhere in Wales because it is 2 hrs from London. The Business Park at J33 is in the Plan because a key aim of the Wales Spatial Plan is to attract an international HQ to relocate here - originally the Vale and RCT put forward sites on either side of J34 as alternatives. There is a strong argument for encouraging more 'home-grown' jobs eg spin-offs from our Universities including UHW.*

(Greenwood Rd) There have been some limited moves out of Cardiff eg the Welsh Government Office in Merthyr. It's a false assumption that many people will move in to Cardiff from the Valleys – the economics don't add up. Much inner city housing is now used for students. *It is unlikely that much of the new housing will be social housing. Some will be more 'affordable' for buying or renting, but only in the sense of being small ie 1 or 2 bedroom properties. Some major housing applications have been submitted in Lisvane/Pontprenau, but none in NW Cardiff as yet*

(Insole Estate) Do the housing figures include demand for social housing? Yes.

(Hendre Close) I'm sceptical about the process and the vagueness of the transport proposals. Previous plans haven't resulted in modal shift, so why will this be any different? *This is an important point; there seem to be too many jobs in the City Centre, and because some inner suburbs are affluent there's lots of on-street parking. City centre dwellers have to realise that they can't expect to use cars for local trips. Cardiff Councillors had met the Planning Inspectorate Director for Wales recently - when asked about traffic impacts his initial comment was "So what?"*

(Insole Estate) Small house builders have been arguing for release of small parcels of land. There should be room for this.

(The Green) The Council used to buy up land and parcel it off to different sizes of firm - the Insole Estate was developed in this way.

(Palace Ave) Is there any way of influencing the Masterplans? *Masterplanning work will continue, but the key policies will be as set out in the LDP.*

(Danescourt) The Traffic Management Act makes it a statutory duty on local authorities to ease traffic. *Traffic generation used to be a strong argument against development, but is considered much less of an impediment nowadays.*

(Insole Court) Cathedral Road has parking on both sides. Clearing this would allow a better traffic flow.

(Insole Court) Is congestion charging an option? *It is an option, as is increasing long stay parking charges. We need to think of ways of using our roadspace more efficiently.*

(Insole Court) Is the A4232 being completed as part of the Plan? *Yes – the missing linke (the Eastern Bay Link) is being funded as part of an agreement between the Welsh and UK Governments – the latter are funding the M4 Relief Road around Newport (at a cost of £1bn). Perhaps what we need is part of the proceeds of cancellation of HS2?*

(Danescourt) We are exasperated at the lack of join-up between Cardiff Council and the Welsh Government. Danescourt Residents' Association has written to the First Minister about this, complaining about the fact that the LDP process doesn't seem to be value for money. An acknowledgement had been received saying the letter has been passed to Carl Sargeant AM (the Minister responsible for Planning). *Cllrs used to think this lack of join-up was a result of tensions between Lib-Dem and Labour control, but this is Labour-Labour.*

CONCLUSION

3.1 GB-G thanked our Councillors and the adjacent Community Councils for their support, and thanked everyone present for taking the time to attend.

3.2 Those present agreed unanimously to support the approach as discussed above.

3.3 A record of proceedings and the final response would be posted to the Llandaff Society web-site asap. Those present were encouraged to attend the final Cardiff Council event tomorrow evening, and could respond separately to the consultation should they wish to.

24 residents attended, plus Ward Councillors Gareth Aubrey and Kirsty Davies