

Cabinet 6 May

Statement from Pennington and Lymington Lanes Society, a local community group with 700 members who are committed to protect and enhance the special character of the lanes to the south of Pennington and Lymington.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak in these exceptional times. Our statement relates to your next agenda item concerning the adoption of the Local Plan.

We are specifically concerned with a site to the south of Lymington, identified as SS6 in the plan but our concerns raise broader issues relating to consultation and process. The Gunning Principles, which have been confirmed by the Court of Appeal as applicable to all public consultations, require (amongst other things) that consultation takes place when a proposal is still at a formative stage and the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account. They have been breached in this case. SS6 was not identified as a strategic site at the initial consultation stage known as Regulation 18 and as such there has not been true consultation on this site as required by law. In addition the Inspectors have not addressed this point nor the substance of many of the other points made by some 340 representors including ourselves following the consultation at deposit draft stage, known as Regulation 19. Therefore any adoption of the Plan which includes site SS6 would appear to us to question its lawfulness, as neither the Council nor the Inspectors have properly considered the representations made in a meaningful way and indeed the Inspectors have simply not addressed the Regulation 18 point at all.

The allocation of SS6 as proposed by the Council would unreasonably and without justification or scrutiny impose detailed development requirements which could deny the local community an opportunity for democratic involvement if development proceeds. The Council has ignored the request from both PALLS and the elected local council, Lymington and Pennington Town Council, to remove the reference in policy SS6 for a vehicular through route in the absence of any verified highways assessment in order that this matter could be determined in the light of all the evidence at the appropriate time if development proceeds. This is another example of how the Council has failed to listen to the reasonable concerns of its communities and denied them the right to meaningful consultation and participation.

Bruce Tindall

Chair PALLS