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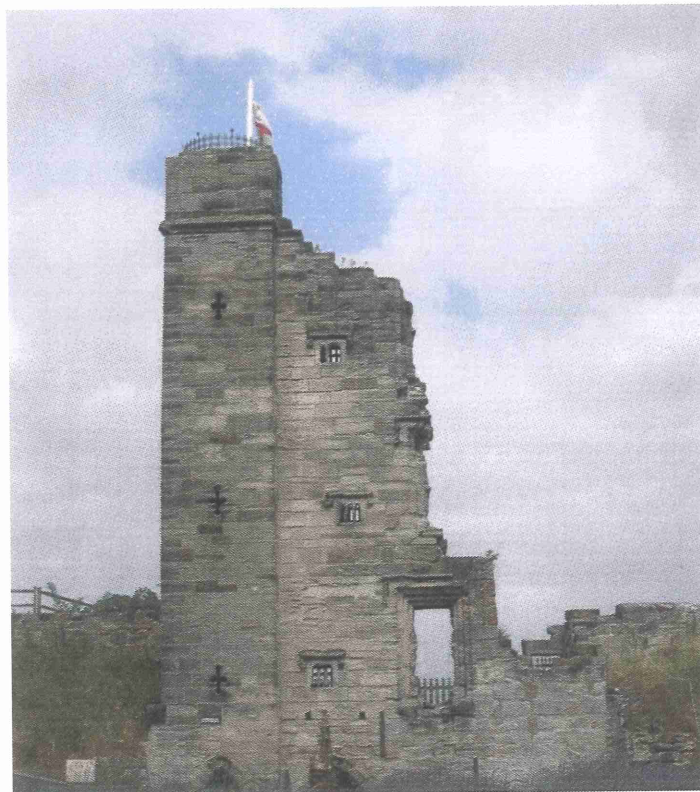
# TUTBURY PARISH COUNCIL

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ESBC Local plan position statement



High Tower - Tutbury Castle



OVERALL SPATIAL STRATEGY  
ISSUE 4

**East Staffordshire local plan inquiry**  
**Tutbury Parish Council**  
**Position Statement – Overall Spatial Strategy**  
**(SP2 Settlement hierarchy LP275)**  
**Not Sound – positively prepared or justified**

**1.0 Good intentions**

1.1 The national planning policy framework (NPPF) and the Borough Council's Scheme of Community Involvement (SCI) are designed, to give effect to the government's concept of localism. They are meant to act as a counter weight to the otherwise predominant message contained in the framework i.e. 'the presumption in favour of development.'

1.2 Section 155 of the NPPF advises that early and meaningful engagement and collaboration is essential. It goes on, 'A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged.... to reflect a collective vision..... for sustainable development in the area'.

1.3 The NPPF suggests that strategic policies should deliver not only jobs and houses, but infrastructure including health and community facilities. Local Planning Authority's (LPA's) should also work with authorities and providers 'to ...*assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure*'.

1.4 The initial version of the SCI stated that 'the importance of consultations cannot be under estimated and that they always have a role to play'. It continues, 'early involvement in the process means that consultation will be meaningful as comments will be made early enough to have a profound impact in the plan'. In the latest version of the SCI, this message has been diluted in respect of parish councils and now appears to be concerned more with the process of consultation rather than the outcome.

1.5 It is clear that the intent of both the NPPF and the SCI is to set out an obligation on the LPA to engage with the community and organisations within it.

**2.0 Local plan development**

2.1 The local plan (LP) process has been a protracted affair culminating in the current inquiry. During this process, Tutbury became one of the first 'strategic' villages to have a major housing application determined mainly on the basis that it could not be refused as the Borough Council did not have a 5 year land supply. This site is now included in the latest version of the plan. Notwithstanding the NPPF policies & SCI promises referred to above, the Parish Council was not consulted during the yearlong pre-application phase of the project.

2.2 ESBC has determined that broadly speaking, the houses required to satisfy need will be allocated mainly in Burton and Uttoxeter and in strategic villages, categorised into three tiers. Significant provision has been made in 'strategic villages' (Tier 1 - 6.3%) as they are deemed to already have services and infrastructure in place to accommodate the needs of the population in a sustainable way.

2.3 In the 'Preferred Options' version of the local plan reference was made to the settlement hierarchy 'to access the role of each village in the borough'. A survey attempted to quantify 'the services that each village currently provided to meet local needs together with those of a small rural catchment'. The Parish Council responded to a consultation on this, pointing out its limitations with particular emphasis on the capacity of existing services to meet local and increased need particularly in health care. *(It is noted that in the latest settlement hierarchy topic paper, capacity and quality of existing services/infrastructure are specifically excluded.)*

### **3.0 Parish Council involvement in planning**

3.1 Tutbury Parish Council has always taken a keen interest in planning. It has participated in previous local plan, structure plan inquiries and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) process. The parish council endeavours to ensure that the historic nature of the village is preserved and that any new development must make a positive contribution. In this process the Council regularly consults with parishioners on local planning matters and holds public meetings for major applications to ensure that parish council reflects public concerns and aspirations.

3.2 These views are reflected in the representations made on the latest version of the local plan, the first of which is LP275; its main points are:

- The analysis giving rise to the strategic designation was flawed
- No account was taken of quality or capacity issues
- There was a lack of effective control over speculative development
- A lack of consultation for the Tier 1 villages.

### **4.0 Consultation or notification**

4.1 At times it would seem that the Borough Council only notifies consultees rather than invites them, to proactively engage as the NPPF suggests, in a meaningful way and answer specific points with clear explanations.

4.2 In their response to LP275, ESBC implies that because of the range of facilities in the village, it precisely fulfils the requirements for sustainable development for Tutbury and Rolleston on Dove but neglects/ignores the capacity and quality issues. GP practices in the village are so overstretched that there are long lead times for appointments and patients are invited to petition health organisations to take measures to deal with the problem. At an annual parish meeting, representatives from a local GP practice set out their doubts for future of health services in the village, problems with doctor recruitment and service funding.

In the meantime 224 houses are under construction which will exacerbate the situation and result in parishioners seeking health services further afield, hardly an improved sustainable option.

4.3 The solution offered in the LP (SP9) is to 'work with partners' to provide necessary services etc. There is a distinct lack of detail as to how this will actually be achieved; such detail is needed to give credibility to this statement, either in the LP or supporting infrastructure documents. In addition, paragraph 3.54 item 3 on page 95 of the LP does not make it to the plan itself with the result that bullet point four in SP7 is not clear or strong enough to remedy the problem.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

5.1 Should further speculative development be attempted in the parish, the level of protection afforded by LP policies may well be outweighed by an inadequate 5 year land supply which will add to difficulties created by a wrong strategic village analysis and a defective solution.

5.2 These problems which need to be recognised and dealt with stem from a lack of consultation with the local community and its representatives which conflict with the principals of the NPPF and the intent of the SCI; this and other points are ignored by ESBC in their response to the Council's representation LP 275.

5.3 It is vital that within the scope of the LP, the needs of parishioners together with other people wishing to live and work in the area are met and well planned for. The adoption of a wait and see approach is not planning; it is a recipe for long term problems for Tutbury and other villages that with more thought could be avoided. It is hoped that this independent scrutiny of the LP will effect a change in LP policies to overcome the problems highlighted.

Tutbury Parish Council October 2014