

Councillor
Planning & Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board

6th January 2021

Dear Councillor

I am writing on behalf of Save Capel and our 1800+ supporters in advance of the CAB meeting on 11th January, to ask that you do not recommend the draft Pre-submission Local Plan (PSLP) to Cabinet in its current form.

TWBC's Head of Planning recently made it clear the timetable was being driven to avoid the threat of increased housing targets, but the algorithm responsible has been dropped and there is no longer a need to rush through the Local Plan. We believe it better to use the time gained to consider alternative sites and the consequences of the pandemic, with a much-needed emphasis on urban regeneration. Unfortunately, removal of countryside and productive agricultural land remains the focus of the draft PSLP.

We are disappointed the plan still includes over 4,000 houses for Capel Parish in sites at Tudeley and East Capel, despite the overwhelming and unprecedented public condemnation at Regulation 18. Those sites are as unsustainable as they are unpopular; not just with the local community but with neighbouring boroughs concerned about lacking infrastructure and increased flood risk.

However, you may have seen that Save Capel, having consulted its members, now supports an alternative major development at Castle Hill which still falls predominantly within our Parish. It must be understood that Save Capel's support for Castle Hill is as a direct replacement for Tudeley Village. Capel Parish Council has also voted unanimously to endorse Save Capel's stance that Castle Hill represents a more sustainable alternative to Tudeley.

The developer's website describes the vision (www.backcastlehill.co.uk) and plans will be presented to TWBC Chief Executive and Head of Planning this Friday, 8th January.

We understand large developments are not generally popular, and the pressure on Councillors to accept proposals that do not impact so fully on their own wards, but this alternative remains within Capel and scopes 1,500 homes. We also note there is a 1,000+ 'buffer' in the draft PSLP alongside references to windfall sites, particularly brownfield, which should be prioritised.