



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
CHESHIRE

CREWE & NANTWICH DISTRICT

News
March 2005

Local Plan

The Borough's Local Plan 2011 was finally adopted last month. The best news is that following interventions by the County Council and Government Office North West the previously proposed greenfield housing developments at Leighton West and Coppenhall East have been cancelled. The saving of about 80 acres from development is largely the consequence of a higher than expected availability of previously-developed ("brown") and "windfall" sites which will enable the housing target to be achieved without any further loss of green land. This result highlights the importance of CPRE's campaigning that development must not be allowed to run ahead of the rate required by the Plan. Urban redevelopment sites frequently come onto the market as the Plan period progresses. For example, the much discussed redevelopment of Crewe in the vicinity of the railway station could well create more urban housing opportunities.

Local development Schemes

While we might have expected to look forward to several years of stability in the planning field, Local Plans covering a fixed period are now being replaced by Local Development Schemes. The transition period will occupy the next three years, following which the new Scheme will be rolled forward on the basis of an annual review. However, the whole of Plan 2011 will be saved for three years and many of the basic policies, particularly on the protection of our countryside, will continue unchanged well beyond that period. The new Scheme is designed to include more public consultation, indeed one of the portfolio of documents, yet to be issued, is the Statement of Community Involvement. We don't yet know how the borough proposes to consult you, but keep an eye on their occasional newsletter "News and Views", also the local press. CPRE will in any case keep in touch with the planning officers at Municipal Buildings.

Combermere Abbey

Our next big trial of strength will be in supporting the borough and other objectors at the public local inquiry into the Combermere Abbey housing appeal (see previous newsletters). The inquiry will be held at Municipal Buildings over 5 days commencing 24th May.

Brownfield development

With developments outside urban and village settlement boundaries mainly off the agenda for the time being, developers are turning their attention to sites within towns and villages. The main danger here is the loss of valued local amenities to over-dominating, high density housing schemes which simply give maximum profit to the developer. Current examples are the threatened demolition of an historic farmhouse in Rope Lane, Wistaston and the redevelopment of Canalside Yard in Audlem. In both cases the developers are seeking to build high density apartments in large blocks which are unsympathetic to their surroundings and the interests of the local residents. We are actively objecting to both applications. In the case of Audlem, the site has been a centre of trading and employment for over one hundred years, and still has potential for canal- and tourism-related commercial activity. With the possible exception of affordable housing, the preservation of a local employment site is more important than providing dwellings for the general market which has now been adequately supplied for several years ahead.

*Join us at our next meeting to meet
the committee, discuss current
issues and have your say*

at

Hunters Lodge Hotel, Crewe

on

Monday 4th April 2005 at 7.30 pm

**Business will be preceded by AGM business
(approx 20 mins)**

Large gardens

Excessive infilling of larger gardens is also a concern, given the adverse effects this is having on the diversity of street scenes, and the social and ecological benefits of gardens. Such applications will not necessarily be successful and we can assist in finding grounds for opposing them.

Barn Conversions

The numerous barn conversions, although they have contributed to the achievement of the target for new housing, are in too many cases encouraging the spread of population in open countryside in car-dependent, unsustainable locations. Local authorities are beginning to get worried about this and we intend to discuss the possibility of a moratorium on this type of development.

Parish Plans

Finally, Parish Plans are starting to make progress. Dodcott (Burleydam area) have nearly finished theirs, while Audlem have made a good start and hope to have their Plan in print by the end of 2005. We would welcome news of any other SE Cheshire parishes embarking on this process which has the potential to be more influential on planning decisions, in addition to other community benefits.

*Visit our stand, see our displays
and discuss local issues*

at

Nantwich Show

on

Wednesday 27th July 2005

Contacts

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See also website www.cprecheshire.org.uk - Local to You page – Crewe and Nantwich

NANTWICH WALLED GARDEN SOCIETY

The committee trying to save the Old Walled Garden on Kingsley Fields in Nantwich from development by the builders, Bellway Homes, decided that in order to have a better chance of being recognised officially by the Local Authority and other organisations and in order to raise funds it was decided to form the Nantwich Walled Garden Society. Viscount Ashbrook launched the Society on 13th June 2004 and Sir Richard and Lady Baker Wilbraham supported him. The meeting was very well attended and we now have over 70 members.

The aims of the society are: -

1. To prevent the development of housing on the site of the Old Walled Garden off Welsh Row in Nantwich, which was once part of the gardens of Townsend House.
2. To ensure that the Elizabethan walls of the garden are fully restored and reinstated.
3. To restore the garden in a way that reflects its history, so that it can be maintained in perpetuity for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors to Nantwich.

The good news is that the plans by Bellway Homes to build two 2 storey blocks of apartments on the garden was refused by the Development Control Committee of Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council at their meeting of 27th July 2005. Bellway has not appealed against this decision. No doubt that support for the Society by CPRE and many other organisations helped with this refusal.

Recently officers of the Society met with Elizabeth Rodgers, the conservation officer of the Borough Council and as a result of that meeting and with legal advice, the Council is to pursue the matter via listed building legislation and address the structural condition of the wall in conjunction with English Heritage and commission a structural survey of the wall. One of our own members is already surveying the wall in detail.

All information about the garden can be found on our website www.nantwichwalledgarden.org.uk