

23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016

Dear Sir/Madam.

Re Arnside and Silverdale AONB Draft Plan Consultation Document

Firstly, I would want to congratulate the 2 Planning Departments on developing this document from the previous Consultation Document, the range of responses received to that document, and existing Policies from both Local Authorities. It is very encouraging to see Local Authorities working together in such a constructive manner.

In particular, it is important that a vision is being developed for the AONB which enables the ongoing development of healthy and vibrant local communities **within** a framework which protects, conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB. Personally, I was particularly encouraged by Section 4.8, Camping Caravan and Visitor Accommodation. This is an area in which commercial interests have frequently clashed with resident and conservation interests in recent years. A clear framework, which sets the boundaries in the constructive manner proposed, is to be welcomed.

There remain 3 areas I wish to comment on.

1. **Major Development.** This section would benefit from more specific guidelines about what is major (e.g. number of housing units proposed, size of area included in any application). As it stands it is too susceptible to individual interpretation, which will vary as the personnel of Councils, and their Officers change.
2. **Monitoring and Implementation.** Currently, policing of implementation appears weak, and has been highlighted by the Applications for Licences for Lawful Use, which have been made in both Council areas. These have only arisen because sites have been able to develop beyond the level of previous approvals without being called to account until such time as it may be too late. Enforcement needs to be more proactive, with mechanisms beyond those that rely on public reporting of issues.
3. **Whinney Fold, Silverdale.** It is disappointing to see this site retained for potential housing development. I note that there was "some support for development", but have only heard expressions of concern from those living near the site.
  - a) Planning creep is an issue here, with development offering encouragement for further applications on adjoining land offered for development during the previous consultation.
  - b) During the Consultation event at the Gaskell Hall on 24<sup>th</sup> November I was informed that when the original houses were approved in Whinney Fold the Council had given an undertaking that no more would be added at a later date. However, the application was eventually determined by a planning inspector, who did not retain that condition. It is disappointing that the Council has not shown the strength to retain its original view.
  - c) There is support for affordable housing in Silverdale, as evidenced by the Housing Needs Survey. However, Planning Officers are aware of alternative infill or brownfield sites, which fall outside the scope of the DPD, and which would provide suitable alternative locations. In the event of any application being approved for this site it is imperative that it is contained, and that conditions are included to prevent any subsequent extension.

Yours Faithfully

W. J. Webb