

North West Cardiff Group

Responding to the concerns of our communities

Creigiau Danescourt Gwaelod y Garth Llandaff Pentyrch Radyr & Morganstown St Fagans

James Clemence
LDP Team : Room 132
Cardiff Council
City Hall
Cardiff CF10 3ND

The Old Church Rooms
Park Road
Radyr
Cardiff
CF15 8DF

April 4, 2014

Dear James,

Cardiff LDP : Alternative Sites Consultation

Please find attached the response to the Alternative Sites consultation from the NW Cardiff Group. Together we represent some 24,000 residents who will all be affected by the proposed development in NW Cardiff. We would like that number to be noted. We have publicised our response widely within our communities and believe that we represent them well and fairly.

We know that this consultation is to consider the Alternative Sites but we see that developers have used it as an opportunity to propose significant changes to strategic sites and to push for development before the plan is adopted. We object to these changes and to the spirit in which they are made.

The Westminster Government has announced plans for the creation of a new garden city of 15,000 homes at Ebbsfleet. Key reasons for siting the new city there are the 'fantastic' existing infrastructure: river transport on the Thames, high-speed rail link between London and the Channel Tunnel, closeness to the A2, M2, M20 and M25 roads and Bluewater shopping centre, and £200m in government investment. A new urban development corporation will oversee the project.

Cardiff's Deposit LDP proposes a total of 11,650 homes in NW Cardiff on greenfield sites that have no existing infrastructure. What little infrastructure there is is on the site boundaries: a few congested country roads and an hourly bus service. A little further from the sites is the M4, the City Line rail and other slow bus links to Cardiff. There is no funding in place for the infrastructure needed and the plan is led by developers who argue to lessen their contributions. The one suggestion for new transport for the 5,000 homes at Site C is a new bus service.

We find it exasperating that the Welsh Government cannot see how unrealistic it is to expect truly sustainable new communities to be built and serviced at the rate proposed and without funding in place. This seems less of a plan and more of a hope that it will all work out in the end. We find that approach alarmingly short-sighted and not in the public interest. Development of our capital city on this scale, with so little regard given to what it will create, cannot be forced into the eleven years that will remain post-adoption of the LDP. We strongly believe that this is a serious obstacle to the future of Wales' capital city. We do not feel it is too much to ask that Welsh Government and Cardiff Council rethink the future of NW Cardiff. We cannot believe that either wants to be responsible for a plan that risks being an international embarrassment.

There have been significant changes to planning the future of Cardiff and SE Wales since the DLDP was published. Both Cardiff Council and the Welsh Government now support the Cardiff Regional Metro and the SE Wales Regional Board.

Telephone
Email :

02920 842213
clerk@radyr.org.uk

: Ffon 1
:E-bost

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On February 21 2014 Cardiff Council's Cabinet endorsed the vision for the Capital Region Metro and supported its potential to deliver the LDP. The Cabinet decision was based on a report which said that the first Metro phase between the City Centre and Cardiff Bay could take three years to deliver, followed by the section between the City Centre and RCT which could take six or seven years to complete, developed alongside the master planning for the LDP.

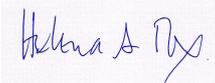
Cardiff acknowledges that the Metro will help to deliver a wide range of improvements for the City. For NW Cardiff it will help the DLDP integrate new development with new transport infrastructure to support sustainable travel and achieve a 50:50 split between car-based and non-car journeys. With a Metro line running through or near Strategic Sites C, D and E this significant new growth corridor for the city could be supported by world class sustainable transport infrastructure. It would minimise additional pressure on the A4119 through Llandaff and be a major contribution to alleviating the pressure from inbound commuting.

In the light of support for the Metro, we propose an alternative approach for NW Cardiff which will create sustainable communities that benefit new and existing residents alike and enhance Cardiff as a whole: a phased chain of villages separated by green space and linked by the Metro to be delivered from 2021 onwards or as soon as the Metro is in place. This is a credible amendment to the DLDP. Development would be overseen by a single independent delivery body responsible for doing its best for new and existing residents, now and in the future. We say that such a plan is in the long-term public interest of Cardiff and urge you to consider it.

Once development consent is granted, the value of Cardiff's land will increase vastly. A significant proportion of this increase should be kept for public benefit as it only results from the planning process. In NW Cardiff the new land values could be as much as £1 billion from almost 1,000 acres. Not only will this money be lost to Cardiff, it will be lost to Wales. The alternative approach that we propose would keep much of the money in Cardiff and help deliver the full range of community and area-wide infrastructure before and alongside development. It makes the cost of some £161 million for the Metro link between the City Centre and RCT achievable.

We ask, therefore, that you publish changes to the DLDP to align it with the Metro and the SE Wales Region. It should show that development is aligned with the Metro and the boundaries of the housing sites it will affect amended to reflect the maximum walking distances from Metro stations. This is not a request to delay the LDP because we fully understand the urgent need for its adoption. It is a request to delay development in NW Cardiff until the Metro is in place. Even then, it alone cannot solve all the transport and general infrastructure problems already faced by the area.

Yours truly,



Helena Fox

On behalf of the North West Cardiff Group

Cc: Cllr Phil Bale, Cllr Ramesh Patel, Mark Drakeford AM, Kevin Brennan MP
Enc.

Telephone
Email :

02920 842213
clerk@radyr.org.uk

: Ffon 2
:E-bost