

BEAUMARIS TOWN COUNCIL

STATEMENT FOR HEARING 5 OCTOBER 2016

This statement is made in support of the representations already submitted by the town council.

The Town Council is of the opinion that that the plan, as it relates to Beaumaris and the surrounding area, does not adequately deliver important parts of its strategic objectives. In particular the following objectives are hindered rather than enabled:

1. Choice of housing type, size and tenure meets the requirements of a range of different households within local communities including the provision of an appropriate level of affordable housing based on defined local needs
2. Encourage where appropriate, brownfield development and use of existing buildings, including long term vacant housing is a priority
3. Promote prosperous and sustainable communities that support local services including the provision of additional housing and related development proportionate to local requirement

The area covered by Beaumaris Town Council (the settlements of Beaumaris and Llanfaes) has needs which are not adequately addressed by the plan. In particular the plan does not allow for the current shortage of housing for local people to be addressed.

Particular local housing issues include:

- A lack of affordable housing. This was confirmed by a report by Anglesey County Council rural housing enabler. This makes it hard for families to remain in the area and is possibly contributing to falling pupil numbers in local schools.
- Loss of local housing to tourism (e.g. second homes and holiday rentals). In recent years many planning applications in Beaumaris (e.g. recent proposed development at Castle Court) have been to create accommodation more suited to the holiday market than the local housing market.
- A shortage of social housing in the Llanfairpwll, Menai Bridge, Llandegfan, Beaumaris area. Demand for social housing in this area is high which results in particularly long waiting lists compared to the rest of the island (information provided to the Town Council at a recent meeting with ACC Housing Officers).
- Beaumaris (along with Llanfairpwll, Menai Bridge and Llandegfan) is increasingly part of a commuter belt serving Bangor and other employment sites along the North Wales Coast. This is supported by the planning unit's own figures (Topic paper 5) which show that 24% of Anglesey's workforce commutes across the straits to work.
- There are very few development opportunities within the settlement boundary of Beaumaris. The historic centre of the town is densely developed and is a conservation area to protect its character. The UNESCO World Heritage Site further restricts development on the northern edge of the town.

It is the Town Council's opinion that the plan's slavish adherence to the restrictions of the settlement hierarchy means that barriers have been put in the way of dealing with these issues in future.

Beaumaris and Llanfaes's position in the settlement hierarchy has restricted the number of housing units allocated to the area.

Furthermore the number of units which have already been given planning permission limits the draft local development plan's assessed need for land to be released for development. However 35 of the 38 approved units identified by the plan (Appendix 5 of the Deposit Plan 2015) are restricted to people over 55 so will not serve the needs of the local housing market, particularly young families.

Beaumaris Town Council proposes that the allocation of housing to Beaumaris should be greater in recognition of the need to address:

- Lack of affordable housing
- Compensation for loss of local housing to holiday homes and lets
- The fact that the current backlog of planning permissions does not serve the local housing market and the need for affordable housing for young families
- The indicative windfall provision of 55 units (Page 160 of the Deposit Plan) will be difficult to provide within the existing settlement boundary without significant pressure on the character of the conservation area.
- The role of Beaumaris and neighbouring settlements as a commuter belt for Bangor and the extra demands that this places on housing in Beaumaris

The Town Council accepts that a greater allocation of housing would probably result in the currently unused brownfield site (former Lairds site) to be brought back into use. This site has been unused for almost 40 years and though of some historical interest (as a site of a World War 2 Catalina flying boat factory) it is to all intents and purposes a redundant employment site which without development will increasingly become an eyesore. In the absence of significant improvement to the road access it is unlikely to return to use as a major employment site.

The Town Council acknowledge that the site is too big for housing alone but a mixed residential (to serve the local housing market), employment (perhaps serving local boating interests) and tourism use might be appropriate. The site also provides a possible location for the proposed extra-care housing facility for SE Anglesey which would be consistent with the plan's stated preference for such facilities to be located sub-regional, urban or local service centres.



Professor T W Ashenden
Town Clerk