



CLOUD AGM OCTOBER 2020

Report by the Chair on CLOUD's activities over the year from October 2019.

1. Local Plan

It is worth remembering that CLOUD was established in October 2017, more than three years ago, in response to a proposal by Lancaster City Council to create what was then being called Bailrigg Garden Village. Public consultations were held and a petition opposing this development was submitted to the City Council. Throughout the subsequent 2 years we campaigned vigorously against the Plan - as reported to the [2018](#) and [2019](#) AGMs (These reports plus current news items and back copies of [CLOUD Newsbriefs](#) are all available on the [CLOUD website](#)).

At the 2019 CLOUD AGM we reported that we were awaiting the Planning Inspector's report into the soundness of the Local Plan. We said we were not optimistic that he had taken our objections seriously and our fears were confirmed when his report was eventually (and belatedly) issued in June 2020. The report effectively approved the Local Plan, subject to a series of so-called major modifications. However, none of these fundamentally changed the Plan nor did they address any of CLOUD's objections. (See [Newsbrief 70](#) for more on this)

On 29th July 2020 Lancaster City Council completed the Local Plan process by holding a ‘virtual’ debate, the outcome being a vote to formally adopt the Plan, which is therefore now operative. At the start of the debate a

CLOUD committee representative spoke, not to reiterate our previous expressed objections (which would have been pointless), but to encourage the Council to review the Plan in the light of its climate emergency declaration, flooding in south Lancaster, the Coronavirus pandemic etc. ([Here is a link to the full address](#)) During the debate, Councillor Dowding proposed an amendment to review the Plan’s housing-building targets in July 2021. Although defeated, the vote on it was close. In her closing remarks, the Council Leader, Erica Lewis, recognised that the Plan did need reviewing in light of changes since it was first drafted. (For more on this see [Newsbrief 72](#)) Subsequently the Council announced a Plan review, in the light of the Climate Emergency, starting with public consultation which runs until 20th November 2020.

2. Activity on Planning Issues 2019-20

[20/00064/EIO | EIO Scoping request for the creation of a holiday village/leisure destination at Home Farm, Ellel Grange.](#)

This scoping request for holiday lodges, retail outlets, artisan pods, hotel and conference centre was made in January 2020. The land for the original proposal for Ellel Artisan Village was not included in the Local Plan and this proposal is subject to different planning rules from housing. A full application has not yet been submitted.

19/01135/OUT Gladman’s Application - land NE of Bailrigg Lane Council planning

This major planning application for 680 houses was made in the autumn of 2019 and attracted significant opposition. CLOUD’s objection was lodged in December 2019 and is outlined in [Newsbrief 62](#) This application has yet to go to the Planning Committee

20/00305/OUT Subject: Outline planning application for up to 55 residential units and creation of a new access. Proposed Location: Land At Grid Reference 347281 459157 Ashton Road Lancaster Lancashire

An application for 125 houses on this land was rejected in 2016. [CLOUD lodged an objection](#) to the current application in September 2019.

Development has started on the Chapel Lane bungalows opposed by CLOUD in February 2019. [CLOUD objected](#) on the reserved issues on 19/01100/REM Ward Field Farm for 68 dwellings in December 2019. No work has yet begun on this development.

See [Newsbrief 58 for summary of planning applications](#)

3. Flooding

The cumulative impact of over 1,000 new houses and the construction of the Health Innovation Campus in South Lancaster led South Lancaster FLAG, Galgate FLAG and CLOUD to alert the Lancaster Guardian to their collective concerns. (FLAG = Flood Action Group). The result was [a powerful article in the Lancaster Guardian](#), highlighting the consequences, especially for surface water flooding and for pressure on Victorian sewers. In March this year a letter from CLOUD was published in the *Lancaster Guardian* concerning climate change and flood risks.

In August 2020 Hala flooded twice, further emphasising the ongoing and serious flood issues.

Especially worrying is the anticipated planning application from Story Homes for 210 houses on landland adjacent to Grab Lane including a field which the Environment Agency wishes to preserve as a green space because it would reduce the risk of flooding downstream on the Burrowbeck in Hala.

4. Freedom of Information Requests

In his Spring budget on 11th March 2020, (before the Coronavirus lock-down), the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced measures benefitting the northwest of England. These included *‘£140 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the ‘South Lancaster Growth Catalyst’ proposal which will unlock up to 9,185 homes.’*

As this was the first we had heard of this measure and especially as the figure of 9185 new houses was far higher than anything we’d seen previously, we submitted a series of questions under the Freedom of Information Act to HM Treasury, Homes England, Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council. Only Lancashire County Council provided a comprehensive response : *‘This figure [9185 homes] is arrived at by taking the estimated number of houses across the entirety of the South Lancaster broad area of growth which includes, but is not restricted to, the new garden village. This totals 5,185. To that is added a potential additional 3,500 after 2031, the need for and location of which would be identified as part of the next local plan. Finally, 500 is added as an allowance from the 2000 new student residential units planned by the university.’* We were also advised that the £140M only covered road construction - no funds were provided for the bus rapid transit system or the cycle superhighway, schools and other local infrastructure which had been promised in the Local Plan.

(See [Newsbrief 71](#) for full details.)

Stephen Constantine
Chair, CLOUD