

Tony Blackburn
Programme Officer
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Via E-mail: programme.officer@carlisle.gov.uk

Dated: 4th January 2016

Re: AWAZ Cumbria Response to the Statement by Carlisle City Council EL2.012d District Local Plan Examination - Matter 4

Dear Tony Blackburn

AWAZ Cumbria requests you to consider this submission in response to the Statement by Carlisle City Council E12.012d on Matter 4: Gypsy and Travellers Site Provision.

AWAZ Cumbria has raised serious concerns and refuted the Council misleading statement points 1.15 page 6 and 1.20 on page 7. We have communication with the Council's lead officer on Equalities on 18th November 2015 and received an e-mail from the Principle Planning Officer on 26th November. We have replied back to the council on 27th November and copied you in as well.

We are disappointed to note that we have not received any further response or explanation from the Council to date. As the Carlisle District Local Plan 2015-2013 Examination documents library maintains the misleading Statement by the Carlisle City Council EL2.012d and the Council has not amended this statement yet. We wish to put our response on record so that all the stakeholders have correct information as part of the examination process and would like you to bring this statement to the attention of the Inspector on 19th January 2016.

AWAZ Cumbria has concerns that the Carlisle City Council has made a completely misleading and incorrect statement with regard to specific engagement with AWAZ Cumbria in the Carlisle City Council statement (Nov 2015) Re: Carlisle District Local Plan Examination Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) Matter 4: Gypsy & Travellers Site Provision on page 6 point 1.15.

“AWAZ- a Cumbria wide organisation which acts on behalf of BME people including Gypsies and Travellers were specifically engaged in the preparation of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) [SD 012] of the Plan and therefore were fully aware of the aspects of the Plan which were of relevance to them. They raised no concerns over the site selection process and the site taken forward.”

and on page 7 point 1.20

The Equality Impact Assessment [SD-120] which accompanies the plan was prepared in consultation with AWAZ. No concerns were raised about the policy wording or the location of the allocation.

Below is the text from the e-mail we have sent to the Council's Principle Planning Officer (policy) on 27th November 2015.

In response to an AWAZ E-mail dated 18th November 2015 to the relevant Council officers “Hi, The Carlisle City Council statement Re: Carlisle District Local Plan Examination Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) Matter 4: Gypsy & Travellers Site Provision has been brought to my attention. In the statement on page 6 point 1.15 it is stated that the Council has specifically engaged with AWAZ in the preparation of EqlA. Could you please advise when this engagement on EqlA has been done and who the Council has engage with at AWAZ?”

AWAZ Cumbria has received following response from the Council on 26th November:

“The draft equality impact screening document was completed by officers within Carlisle City Council and shared with a range of stakeholders including AWAZ as set out on page 4 of the EqlA. AWAZ were included in list of groups (that had been identified as being stakeholders in a named protected characteristic) that were notified via e-mail to admin@awaz.info by Steven O’Keeffe. The email notified all the groups of the consultation and invited the groups to participate.”

AWAZ Cumbria has not been specifically engaged in the Equality Impact Analysis process and our records show that we did not receive any notification via e-mail with an invitation to comment on EqlA or engage with the Council on this subject matter.

AWAZ Cumbria has serious concerns that the Council is interpreting its equality impact screening process by using a tick box exercise of notifying community groups on its mailing list as a ‘specific engagement ‘on EqlA.

The above response from the Council clearly demonstrates that the Council has not undertaken the full Equality Impact Analysis and there is no evidence to suggest that the council has given due regard in this matter to adequately satisfy the requirements to achieve the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty under Equality Act 2010.

Therefore, we ask the Council to immediately remove the misleading and incorrect point 1.15 on page 6 from the Carlisle City Council statement Re: Carlisle District Local Plan Examination Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) Matter 4: Gypsy & Travellers Site Provision.

We would like an assurance from the Council that the Council officers will not use any such misleading statement in their internal or publicly available documents without prior engagement with AWAZ Cumbria.

We would also like to receive a copy of the amended Carlisle City Council statement Re: Carlisle District Local Plan Examination Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) Matter 4: Gypsy & Travellers Site Provision at your earliest convenience but not later than 8th December 2015. We would welcome an opportunity to support the Council in reviewing, identifying and achieving Equality objectives to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

AWAZ Cumbria has not received any response from the Council to the above submission. Therefore we now ask you to put on record that AWAZ Cumbria strongly objects to the incorrect and misleading point 1.15 and 1.20 contained in the Council’s Statement EL2.012d and our this response should be considered along with AWAZ Statement EL2.006b.



Empowers the Voice of Black and Minority Ethnic People and Communities

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If you need any further help or information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

Aftab Khan

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