

## **Matter 7. Proposed Housing Site Allocations.**

### **7c – Proposed housing site allocations, safeguarded land and direction for growth - Edge of Coventry.**

**Questions 1 -23.** We do not wish to comment on the specific questions which relate to the 3 allocated sites as our interest is in a nearby site which in terms of the criteria used, we believe is equally appropriate, if not better than those proposed to be allocated. As a result, it seems more apt to summarise the reasoning.

We believe that the land “South of Gibbet Hill Road” and “North of Cryfield Grange” scores equally highly in the assessment process as say Kings Hill yet the Council has chosen not to allocate it. As noted elsewhere, apart from also being in the Green Belt, it is unconstrained by any statutory designations, major service corridors or significant landscape issues yet has existing public transport links at the boundary and borders the built up area which makes it a highly sustainable location. We believe that the only reason why it was allocated was that, at the time, there was a concern over ownership and therefore deliverability. (The long standing, farmer owner had sold a small parcel of land some years ago to the University and it recently transpired that a mistake had been made with the registration of the land.)

This meant that there appeared to be an ownership dispute which MIGHT affect the Council’s ability to demonstrate to the Inspector that there was sufficient deliverable land to demonstrate soundness. This “mistake” has been rectified by mutual agreement and there is no longer any concern over deliverability. In fact, the landowner is extremely keen to cooperate with the Council and make the land available for the earliest possible development and therefore earliest possible contribution to meeting need.

The land is Green Belt although a good number of the other sites being proposed are also Green Belt. However, it does have a number of distinct advantages compared to other sites e.g.

- the land in all 3 (arbitrary) sections is in the ownership of one willing owner;
- it is free from constraints inc. woodland, footpaths, nature reserves, ecological designations;
- land on both sides has already been released or proposed to be released from the Green Belt;
- In the 2009 Green Belt Review ALL this land was formally considered and designated as “Least Constrained Parcels” (Area C13b.) It would make sense to release further land from such areas.
- Whilst being reasonable quality agricultural land it is constrained by being directly adjacent to housing and the University. The farming landowners believe that this land is more suitable to be released from agricultural use than other, more productive land in the area.
- all mains utility services are available adjacent to the site;
- there is good access direct from Gibbet Hill Road together with existing public transport links;
- no services cross any of the land making it readily developable without delay or disruption;
- all sustainability criteria are met as a result of the land adjoining a major University Campus.

It all directly adjoins the existing development of Coventry and IF land is to be released to help meet housing need, then land adjoining existing development is clearly preferable.

The land is **suitable, available and achievable**. It is **deliverable** in the short term and can make an early contribution to meeting the housing needs.