

BARBY & ONLEY PARISH COUNCIL NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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3rd November 2016

Development Strategy
Growth and Investment Services
Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall
Evereux Way
Rugby
CV21 2RR

Dear Sirs,

Rugby Borough Local Plan Publication Draft

Barby & Onley Parish Council believe that Rugby Borough Local Plan Draft contains basic flaws that in its current state would allow excessive numbers of houses to be developed on open countryside.

Rugby Borough Council Local Plan identifies a need for 9600 houses within the Rugby Area between 2011 and 2031 with a further 2800 houses required to supply the requirements of Coventry, thus making a total of 12400 houses.

In the Draft Local Plan of December 2015 the additional housing required by Coventry was to be met by a development site at Walsgrave on Sowe site which would have required release of Green Belt land to allow development. The location would have met the unmet housing needs of Coventry on a site surrounded by brown field sites of Ansty Park and Rolls Royce – so in reality the “Green Belt” has already been compromised in this area.

The consultation responses to the preferred option of Walsgrave Hill farm states that *“whilst the location of Walsgrave Hill farm allocation on the Coventry edge was supported by some, the required Green Belt release was not supported by others who argued that exception circumstances required to justify such release did not exist and the allocation would therefore not be compliant with the NPPF”*

Instead of Walsgrave Hill Farm, Rugby Borough Council has substituted the isolated site of Lodge Farm off A45, 5 miles from Rugby on the Northamptonshire border, which is situated on farmland within the open countryside of the Leam valley as an alternative.

The Parish Council wish to raise the following points:-

- a) Is this Lodge Farm housing site required?
Rugby has identified a need for a total of 12400 houses by 2031 but the Draft Housing Trajectory shows that this target will have been exceeded by 442 houses by 2031 without any houses built on the Lodge Farm A45 site. We cannot see how this “Garden Village” site can be justified.
- b) Is it justifiable to build in rural, open countryside as an alternative to using a “Green belt” site already compromised by Coventry & Warwick Hospital on one side and Industrial/Employment sites of Ansty Park and Rolls Royce on the other?

- c) Will educational needs be met, with a primary school only planned after 25 homes are occupied, and no provision for additional Secondary education places?
- d) The Transport Assessment clearly states that the only way that any development can be entertained at the Lodge Farm site is if the South West Link Road is put in place first, however the document showing how the plan will be delivered states that Lodge Farm will provide off site contributions to the South West Rugby Spine Road through developer contribution. This assumes that a developer will be found who is prepared to contribute to the South West Rugby Spine Road prior to any commencement of development on the Lodge Farm site.
- e) The Transport Assessment is flawed as it stops at the Warwickshire County boundary and does not take into consideration traffic flows on any local roads within Northamptonshire despite plans indicating that traffic will access the M1 south and A14 via Braunston, Daventry, Barby and Kilsby.
These local road networks are already under pressure from increased traffic volumes generated by development at Daventry Rail Freight Terminal and this will continue to grow with the development of Rugby Radio Mast site, which is scheduled to take 6200 homes by 2031.
- f) The Transport Assessment acknowledges that pollution levels at Dunchurch Cross roads exceed European safety levels of nitrous oxides, and any increase of traffic by development of 1500 houses in a “Garden Village” site at Lodge Farm will be unsustainable and have a detrimental effect on the environment.
- g) We do not feel that the impact on the landscape and environment has been taken into consideration with a proposal to build a large housing development in a rural area of prime farm land. The site at Lodge Farm is isolated from other built up areas and is contrary to the statements made in the Draft Local Plan which state that brownfield development will be promoted through the Local Plan.
- h) The Leam valley is a flood plain and local villages currently experience flooding problems in the winter. Building on a large area of open farm land will exacerbate the problems.
- i) SA Objective No1 is to “Reduce/eliminate poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion.
We question how a housing development completely separated from the Rugby conurbation and with no significant employment opportunities in the locality, will meet this objective. Residents would be dependent almost entirely on motor vehicles to access employment, education, shopping, recreation and healthcare. For these reasons it will not be a viable site for affordable or social housing. Rather that reduce social exclusion, it would be socially exclusive!. Loss of open countryside, in the Leam valley with its far reaching views will reduce the social well-being of the local community. Loss of land classed as Grade 3 agricultural quality will change this area forever.

Yours sincerely



Catherine Camp
Parish Clerk

cc R Wood Daventry District Council

Chris Heaton-Harris MP; Jeremy Wright MP; Mark Pawsey MP