

Warwick Local Plan Examination

Matter 6: Sub-Regional Employment
Site

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Introduction

1. Lenco Investments (Lenco) has controlling interests in land at Baginton, submitted to the Council as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This site is directly adjacent to the proposed Coventry Gateway site (Policy DS16 of [LP23a]) and the Coventry airport. Lenco considers that the Council need to consider not only land for the Gateway, but land for future expansion of the Coventry airport, which may otherwise necessitate a review of the Local Plan.

1) What is intended in terms of the scale, type and mix of development? What would be the extent of built development in the Green Belt?

2. The Council is proposing the release of 235 hectares of land around the vicinity of Coventry airport to be allocated for employment use as part of the Coventry Gateway site, a new employment site of sub-regional importance.
3. The location for this development has been informed by its strategic and logistical connectivity to Coventry and the wider area. The site lies on the A45/A46 interchange, offering direct access to Coventry to the north and the M40 Motorway to the south. Of importance, the site is set around the Coventry airport, which creates the opportunities important for wider economic growth in the sub-region that could not be delivered through piecemeal development. A significant benefit of the Coventry Gateway proposal is that it is expected to contribute towards funding the expansion of the Coventry airport.
4. Where Lenco is concerned however is that there appears to be no strategy for any potential growth of the airport. The proposals for the sub-regional employment site envelop the site, leaving little opportunities for the airport to grow to the north, south and east. The Coventry airport can however expand to the west, which would fall onto Land at Baginton, a site previously promoted to the Council in by Lenco.
5. The Council needs to be satisfied that the airport has sufficient space in which to expand operations to ensure the delivery of the Gateway site. Land at Baginton is available for development and has been previously been promoted for residential use. Lenco maintains the position of suitability of the site as an urban extension to the south of Coventry and also note the locational benefits of the site adjacent to the airport which could, as an alternative, be safeguarded as land to expand the Coventry airport.
6. The NPPF offers a number of protections for the Green Belt to prevent unsuitable development and maintain the functions of the designation (paragraph 80 refers). The NPPF also stresses that upon reviewing Green Belt boundaries as part of the Local Plan, Councils should be satisfied that the Green Belt boundaries will endure and not need to be altered at the end of the plan period. The Council is proposing the removal of a number of Green Belt parcels through the Local Plan, however Lenco considers that the

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Council has not taken regard of potential developments that may necessitate further revisions of the Green Belt.

7. Lenco would strongly encourage the Council to consider Land at Baginton as a site as part of the Coventry Gateway proposal for the potential use as a location for expanding the Coventry airport. This factor has yet to be a consideration as part of the development of the Local Plan, which needs to be informed by the relevant evidence of infrastructure requirements to support the strategy.