

Matter 7A Written Statement – H44 North of Milverton – Mr & Mrs Garvey (13915 / 13911)

My wife and I currently live at Bamburgh Grove, Leamington Spa. Our property currently backs onto the greenbelt which is the subject of the proposed development.

Please accept this letter as our formal objection to the proposed development of this greenbelt area outlining our concerns as to why the site is unsuitable under a number of headings as follows;

Does not meet the development needs of Coventry

- We consider that it is irresponsible to build houses to meet Coventry's housing need on the greenbelt north of Leamington when other more suitable brownfield sites exist.
- The proposed location is some 9 miles from Coventry city centre.
- Public transport links to Coventry are poor and the proposal will encourage increased commuting by car and further congestion on already over crowded roads.
- In practice it is unlikely that people who work in Coventry will want to buy houses in North Leamington, as this is an area unfamiliar to them.
- There are alternative sites, closer to Coventry, which should be used in preference to the land North of Leamington.

Development needs should look at the 'greenbelt' as a last resort

- A substantial part of the site is to be "held in reserve" to meet Leamington's future housing need, if required in the future 'not' Coventry's
- There are alternative sites, outside the greenbelt, that should be used in preference to the land North of Milverton
- Further development north of Leamington can only be achieved by using more of the greenbelt.

Greenbelt at old Milverton is particularly valuable in comparison with other areas

- The greenbelt North of Milverton has been very successful in preventing the spread of Leamington and has stopped Leamington merging with Kenilworth.
- It has preserved the setting of the historic, regency town of Royal Leamington Spa.
- If the proposed development goes ahead the "Green Lung" between Leamington and Kenilworth will be reduced to less than 1.5 miles, with a devastating affect on the abundance of wildlife. (I sit watching a pair of deer as I write this objection)

The exceptional circumstances required by the National Planning Policy Framework to release land from the greenbelt have not been demonstrated

- There are alternative, more sustainable, sites that should be used in preference – such as the already developed areas in south Leamington.
- Warwick District Council has spent a lot of time and resources trying to justify Exceptional Circumstances but has only been able to do so by claiming that the site is suitable for providing houses to meet Coventry's need, not our own.

The proposed park and ride scheme is impractical and will not be used

- The proposed site is too close to Leamington to reduce traffic on the A452.
- There will not be dedicated buses, the proposal is for a "virtual service" using the existing bus services. As a consequence it will be necessary for commuters to time usage in accordance with the bus timetable, making it inflexible.
- There is plenty of parking available in Leamington Spa. Indeed Warwick District Council is planning a new multi storey car park in the area.
- Commuters are unlikely to use the park and ride service to cross Leamington to a similar scheme on the south of Leamington as envisaged by Stage Coach.

- Few park and ride schemes work in practice, Oxford being the only real example because there is so little parking in Oxford.
- The Stratford upon Avon park and ride scheme has been reduced, indicating that they are not a proven alternative.
- I understand that there is no funding presently available for the park and ride scheme.

Value for local residents.

- Many walkers, horse riders, cyclists and runners use the area. If the scheme goes ahead where will the alternative area be.
- The area enables residents from the neighbouring towns to experience the open countryside.
- Old Milverton is one of the last surviving hamlets on the outskirts of Leamington and its integrity will be destroyed by the proposals which will see it absorbed into Leamington.
- Valuable, productive farm land and important wild life habitat will be lost.

I believe that the above points highlight the lack of foresight in proposing the area for development and give a strong argument for it not to proceed.

Yours sincerely

John & Lavina Garvey