

Development Policy Manager,  
Warwick District Council,  
Milverton Hill,  
Leamington Spa, CV32 5QH.

WDC	TRAINING
Ref.	
Offic.	
22 JAN 2014	
SCANNED	
CC	GR PD MA
PRE	GEN DIS

9646 . 17.1.14.

Dear Sir,

I attended the consultation on WDC Village Housing Options at Baginbun on 4.1.14, and have now studied the Local Plan booklet I collected. The basis for the Plan appears to have been well-researched, and

well argued, but I do have some reservations, mainly to do with considerations relating to the Green Belt.

1. Section 3 of the booklet is headed "Green Belt and Exceptional Circumstances". I think the argument you present is ambiguous, because whereas the Green Belt is clearly defined, and has been for many years, your article seems to say that it can now be manipulated / altered at will.
2. My understanding is that there must be "exceptional circumstances", before building on Green Belt land can be allowed. Your book does not say what they might be, and no examples are discussed.
3. You make reference to the NPPF. When it was published, the Government promised that it would not be a "free-for-all" for "developers", and Mr. Pickles was quoted as saying "The Green Belt is safe in our hands". I wish that were true. There are reports almost daily in the press that the Government's assurance is worthless, and that planning rules are to be relaxed even more. What is WDC's position here? There is one glaring example of a planning application being approved

On Green Belt land viz., GATEWAY. I know that is concerned with industrial development, not housing, but the Green Belt principle applies equally to both.

I suggest you must apply two fundamental rules to "development" in addition to the parameters discussed in your report. They are:

1. No building on Green Belt land.

2. (a) No building to take place on new sites until

ALL land for which planning permission

has already been granted has been used up.

(ref. para. 2.13 of your report, which implies

that permission for 5678 dwellings has been

approved. I have seen many references to

400 000 houses countrywide already allowed

but not built.)

(b) When permission is granted, building must started within 6 months. No land to be bought up by developers who then "sit on" it to suit their convenience or profit targets.

(c) No speculative building to be allowed.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. E.R. AUSTIN.