

NPB/GEH/GC.381

23 July 2012

Development Policy Manager
Development Services
Warwick District Council
Riverside House
Milverton Hill
Leamington Spa
CV32 5QH

Dear Sir

**Local Plan Preferred Options – Response in Support of Site L23
(Land at Red House Farm, east of Lillington)**

We act for the sole owner of the above site, Mr H.E. Johnson, and write to confirm that the site remains available and that our client is keen to bring it forward for development.

In addition, we would like to comment on the site specifically and the Local Plan generally, as follows:

1. Access to Red House Farm

In respect of previous correspondence, in particular our letter to Daniel Robinson of the 21st March 2012, we arranged for our Highway Consultants to meet on site with Mr Dave Neale, Highways Engineer at Warwickshire County Council, and there is a joint belief that the current access off Buckley Road is suitable to form the access into the development site. It may also give opportunities for some improvements to the Clare Close/Buckley Road junction, together with opportunities for off-road parking for residents adjacent to the proposed access road. A plan is attached which we believe encapsulates the County Council's requirements. In respect of traffic impact, the County Council did not envisage any difficulties from the proposed development site on the surrounding roads.

2. Loss of Agricultural Land

The land in question is Grade 3, the majority mainly grazed, with some partially set-aside for a long time due to the problems of growing crops in proximity to the residential area; the problems include rubbish deposited in the crops, arson, and trespass. Only relatively recently has the set-aside been reverted to arable as a trial. The impact on the agricultural productivity of the holding as a whole by the loss of land to development is regarded as being minor.



3. **Riding School**

The grazing land forms part of that used by the adjacent Riding School, the latter being a valuable and important local amenity. However, it should be stressed that the loss of this grazing to development will not affect the Riding School since there is alternative grazing (also in my client's ownership and also Grade 3 land) available immediately adjacent to the south. Thus the amenity will remain.

4. **Visual Impact**

The site currently has a strong southern boundary, with a large, thick and tall (over 8'0") hedge which is being maintained and will be allowed to grow up. The ground on the east is partly hedged and treed but does slope away and we envisage further landscaping here to screen the site in the future coupled with designing the development so that it stops short of the north-east boundary.

5. **Infrastructure and local amenity**

We believe the level of housing proposed would not impact unduly on existing local services such as schools and G.P.'s. In fact the site has a number of added advantages, namely that it would be well served by existing public transport in and around Lillington, and it has a good public footpath network and access to other recreational outlets, including the horse riding and stabling previously mentioned.

The public footpath network leads readily into the surrounding countryside, including Newbold Comyn and the golf course and wetlands there. Consequently the site complies with the Warwickshire Right of Way Improvement Plan, which emphasises the importance of new development having access to the countryside. The site has two footpaths that cross it, both of which will be protected. One (W132a) runs north-west / south-east along the track which runs through the site. This track will remain as it links the farm land to the south-east with Lillington. The second (W132) runs along the north-west boundary of the site and will be accommodated by the development.

Also, the site is clearly not at risk of flooding, and any anticipated surface water issues could be readily mitigated by incorporation with landscaped open space.

6. **Loss of Green Belt**

It is appreciated that Green Belts assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and that boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The inclusion of this site does not materially impact or intrude on other land to the south or east of Lillington; in fact, it infills a vacant space and would more naturally align existing housing boundaries. Further, it facilitates the District Council's vision of distributing development across the District and avoiding coalescence, a vision which we support. This "dilute and disperse" policy provides the required growth within a number of individual well-designed neighbourhoods, of differing characters and differing



needs, which the District Council can more easily shape. Consequently, without release of Green Belt, there is the potential for developments to repeat some of the less desirable designs of the past which do not support the District Council's vision. Further, since there is insufficient brown field land for redevelopment, the use of Green Belt becomes unavoidable if the "dilute and disperse" policy is to be taken forward.

7. **Lillington**

We understand that the adjoining area of Lillington is, relatively speaking, socially deprived and we believe that the allocation of L23 gives an opportunity to try and consider some of these issues, particularly in respect of the affordable housing and the provision of suitable open space. We would be happy to work with the District Council on the design of the site to bring wider benefit to the adjacent community. This could do much to influence social cohesion, the creation of a safe place and the improvement of aspiration, all of which would improve the social health and lifestyles of the adjacent community and help to uplift the whole area. There would be benefits for both the existing and new communities from development of this site.

We believe the site should be maintained as allocated, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully
BARLOW ASSOCIATES LIMITED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N P Barlow', with a small flourish at the end.

N P BARLOW

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