



Mr. Dave Barber

The Development Policy Manager

Warwick District Council

Riverside House

Milverton Hill

Leamington Spa

Dear Mr Barber

I would like to invite you to come for a walk over the fields behind Northumberland Road, take a stroll towards Old Milverton and join me for a drink at The Saxon Mill pub. I would like you to take this offer very seriously and I would like you to bring along all the other members of Warwick District Council, especially all those in favour of the latest development plan which proposes to use the green belt land in this area for new buildings.

I would like you to come and see, firstly, what a beautiful area this is and secondly, I would like you to see for yourself just how many other people there are from the surrounding district of Leamington and Warwick who use this area for recreational purposes, either for walking their dogs, running or cycling, over the footpaths that have existed in these fields for years. Infact on your walk you are likely to meet people who have driven out here from as far afield as Kenilwoth, Coventry and Napton. Indeed there are people from the south of Warwick from the Warwick Gates and Woodloes who drive here every day in order to exercise their dogs because they value the area as a safe haven in which to walk.

This area of Green Belt which you are proposing to build on is valuable land which you know from your own Green Belt Study is good agricultural land with a wide and varied wild life. On our walk across this area, I would like to ask you why you have ignored this Green Belt survey and why your current Preferred Option is to build on this land. You maintain that there are 'very special circumstances' which exist and which allow you, as set out in the Government's National Planning Policy to take this land. However, having looked at your arguments I find them unconvincing and flawed.

I would like to argue that having sent out a consultation document in 2008 to ask the public how they would like to see development taking place in Leamington and Warwick you came up with a proposal in 2009 which did not include building in this area of Green Belt. This 2009 Core Strategy document allocated sufficient land in order to build ten thousand houses without the need to use Green belt land. I would like to ask you why you abandoned this plan and why the land you previously felt was suitable for building on has suddenly become redundant. I do not believe that

the builders who acquired options on this land would be happy to hear you say that it is no longer required. Why not use this land instead of Green Belt land? Obviously we need new homes for people but we do not need to use Green Belt land. It is clear that there are ample sites available to the south of Leamington. The council has said that it prefers to spread the burden of the development around the town but this is not a sufficiently sound basis upon which to plan housing nor a sufficiently reasonable excuse for saying that there are therefore 'special circumstances' for using Green Belt land.

In 2008 the council gave people a number of options and the public made their choice, you blatantly ignored it and shelved the plan when the political make up of the council changed. In 2012 you have presented only one option to the public and you have barely consulted with them, except at a number of poorly advertised Forums and supermarket meetings. You found it difficult to answer questions at the Forum I attended and have only given the public a limited time in which to respond. I do believe that this policy will back fire badly on you. I think you will find that your plan is not going down well with the people who you are meant to represent. You will discover that there is a great deal of opposition to your preferred plan and I implore you to reconsider it and look at other options for development.

Your proposals will have a detrimental effect on the important area of Green Belt land which acts as a buffer between Leamington and Kenilworth and will completely alter the picturesque nature of the surrounding countryside in Old Milverton and Blackdown. You have admitted that you will need to upgrade the roads in the area which will further erode the Green Belt land. We do not want larger, wider roads even if they are clogged up at peak times. More roads in the same area will not solve this problem.

Please accept my invitation to walk in this area and have a drink at the Saxon Mill. I think it is only by coming to the area that you will fully realise what a huge mistake you have made by proposing to use this Green belt land in your plans for the development in Leamington and Warwick. I particularly look forward to receiving answers to my questions. I will be joining the people in the area who are fighting the proposals and I think you will be surprised by the strength of opposition which exists in the whole of Warwickshire. I urge you to reconsider your plans before it is too late.

Yours sincerely

