

**Gladman Developments Ltd**

**Representations on  
Warwick District Local Plan  
Publication Draft Consultation**



**June 2014**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Gladman Developments specialise in the promotion of strategic land for residential development with associated community infrastructure. This submission provides Gladman Developments' representations on the Warwick District Publication Draft Local Plan. It follows our previous representations to Council's Revised Development Strategy and Local Plan: Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundaries consultations in July 2013 and January 2014.
- 1.1.2 Through this submission Gladman have highlighted a number of issues with the Warwick District Local Plan in its current form. We critically submit that the Council appears to be progressing a housing requirement that is too low to meet the full objectively assessed needs for the district and is not supported by an adequate evidence base, whilst unmet housing needs in the Coventry and Warwickshire Housing Market Area (HMA) and adjacent authority areas must be addressed now, rather than deferred to future work or a Local Plan review. Based on the existing housing land supply situation in the authority and the need to provide for a higher level of homes in the district, we submit that there is now a need to identify further housing sites in the district, over and above those already proposed to be allocated through the Local Plan, to ensure the authority's housing requirements can be met.
- 1.1.3 Gladman have previously highlighted our support for the decision to identify Radford Semele as an appropriate location for further residential development as one of the district's ten Growth Villages. Through our response to the Local Plan: Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundaries consultation, we particularly supported the identification of Land to the East of Church Lane as the preferred location to provide further housing in the village. Through this submission we therefore strongly object to the Council's decision to now reduce the level of development proposed to be directed to this village, consistent with the capacity of the proposed allocation to the North of Southam Road. We submit that there is no justification for this change in policy stance or justifiable reason why Land to the East of Church Lane should not be allocated through the Local Plan.
- 1.1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out four tests that must be met for Local Plans to be considered sound. In this regard we submit that the Warwick District Local Plan is not:
- **Positively Prepared** - It is not seeking to meet the full objectively assessed housing needs for Warwick District or cross-boundary housing requirements
  - **Justified** - The Council's evidence base fails to provide a robust assessment of the authority's housing needs

- **Effective** – The Local Plan will fail to deliver the necessary level of homes over the Plan period and is not based on effective cross-boundary cooperation on unmet housing needs
- **Consistent with National Policy** – In a number of instances the Local Plan contradicts the requirements of the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

1.1.5 In line with our previous representations and site submissions to the Council, further detailed representations on Land to the East of Church Lane, Radford Semele have been prepared on Gladman’s behalf by Stansgate Planning and submitted separately to these representations. These representations further demonstrate the suitability of Land to the East of Church Lane as an appropriate location for residential development and should be read alongside this submission.

1.1.6 The remainder of these representations are structured as follows:

- Section 2 – National Planning Policy
- Section 3 – Legal Compliance
- Section 4 – Policy DS6 – Level of Housing Growth
- Section 5 – Policy DS7 – Meeting the Housing Requirement
- Section 6 – Policy DS10 – Broad Location of Allocated Housing Sites
- Section 7 – Policy DS11 – Allocated Housing Sites
- Section 8 – Policy DS20 – Accommodating Housing Need Arising from Outside the District
- Section 9 – Policy H2 – Affordable Housing
- Section 10 – Policy SC0 – Sustainable Communities
- Section 11 – Policy BE2 – Developing Strategic Housing Sites
- Section 12 – Policy CC3 – Building Standard Requirements
- Conclusions

## 2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) has been with us now for over two years and the industry is starting to get to grips with its application and some fundamental changes to the way the planning system functions. The Framework sets out the Government’s goal to ‘significantly boost the supply of housing’ and how this should be reflected through the preparation of Local Plans. In this regard it sets out specific guidance that local planning authorities must take into account when identifying and meeting their objectively assessed housing needs:

*“To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:*

- *Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area*
- *Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirements...”*
- *Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10, and where possible for years 11-15” (Paragraph 47)*

2.1.2 The starting point of identifying objectively assessed housing needs is set out in paragraph 159 of the Framework, which requires Local Planning authorities to prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. It is clear from the Framework that the objective assessment of housing needs should take full account of up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic and social characteristics and prospects of the area, with local planning authorities ensuring that their assessment of and strategies for housing and employment are integrated and take full account of relevant market and economic signals (paragraph 158).

2.1.3 Once a Council had identified its objectively assessed needs for housing these needs should be met in full, unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of doing so (paragraph 14). Local planning authorities should seek to achieve each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and net gains across all three. Adverse impacts on any of these dimensions should be avoided. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, mitigation or compensatory measures may be appropriate (paragraph 152).

2.1.4 As the Council will be aware the Government published its final suite of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014, clarifying how specific elements of the Framework should be interpreted when preparing their Local Plans. The PPG on the Housing and Economic Development Needs in particular provides a clear indication of how the Government expects the Framework to be taken into account when Councils are identifying their objectively assessed housing needs. Key points from this document include:

- Household projections published by the Department for Communities and Local Government should provide the starting point estimate of overall housing need
- Plan makers should not apply constraints to the overall assessment of need, such as limitations imposed by the supply of land for new development, historic underperformance, infrastructure or environmental constraints.

- Household projection based estimates of housing need may need adjusting to reflect factors affecting local demography and household formation rates which are not captured by past trends, for example historic suppression by under supply and worsening affordability of housing. The assessment will need to reflect the consequences of past under delivery and the extent to which household formation rates have been constrained by supply.
- Plan makers need to consider increasing their housing numbers where the supply of working age population is less than projected job growth, to prevent unsustainable commuting patterns and reduced local business resilience.
- Housing needs indicated by household projections should be adjusted to reflect appropriate market signals, as well as other market indicators of the balance between the demand for and supply of dwellings.
- The more significant the affordability constraints (as reflected in rising prices and rents, and worsening affordability ratio) and the stronger other indicators of high demand (e.g. the differential between land prices), the larger the improvement in affordability needed, and the larger the additional supply response should be.
- The total affordable housing need should be considered in the context of its likely delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, given the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by market housing led developments. An increase in the total housing figures included in the local plan should be considered where it could help to deliver the required number of affordable homes.

### **3 LEGAL COMPLIANCE**

#### **Duty to Cooperate**

- 3.1.1 The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement established through Section 33(A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by Section 110 of the Localism. It requires local authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary strategic issues throughout the process of Plan preparation. As demonstrated through the outcome of the 2012 Coventry Core Strategy Examination, if a Council fails to satisfactorily discharge its Duty to Cooperate, this cannot be rectified through modifications and an Inspector must recommend non-adoption of the Plan.
- 3.1.2 Whilst Gladman recognise that the Duty to Cooperate is a process of ongoing engagement and collaboration, as set out in the Duty to Cooperate PPG (ID: 9-011-20140306) it is clear that it is intended to produce effective policies on cross-boundary strategic matters. In this regard and with reference to the measures set out in Policy DS20 of the Publication Local

Plan, we strongly question whether the steps proposed to be taken to address unmet housing needs that may arise in the Coventry and Warwickshire HMA and in neighbouring authority areas represent an effective outcome as required by the Duty to Cooperate process.

- 3.1.3 As detailed further in Section 4 of these representations, it is already acknowledged that Coventry City Council are unlikely to be able to accommodate their own future housing needs and that a similar situation exists in relation to the housing needs of Greater Birmingham. Rather than deferring work on these unmet needs to a later review of the Local Plan or further joint work, we submit that there is a clear need for formal arrangements to be put in place to address these issues now. The Duty to Cooperate PPG in particular sets out that where plans are not being taken forward at the same time, local planning authorities should enter into formal agreements with a long term commitment to a joint strategy on cross boundary matters (ID:9-017-20140306).
- 3.1.4 If the Local Plan fails to propose effective measures to address unmet housing needs arising from Warwick’s neighbouring authorities, we would strongly question how the Council can demonstrate that it has met its Duty to Cooperate obligations.

## **4 POLICY DS6 – LEVEL OF HOUSING GROWTH**

### **Policy Overview**

- 4.1.1 Policy DS6 sets out the overall level of homes that will be provided in Warwick District through the Local Plan. It sets out a requirement for 12,860 homes over the Plan period 2011-2029, equating to 720 dwellings per annum.
- 4.1.2 The proposed housing requirements for the authority area have been drawn from the 2014 Coventry and Warwickshire Joint SHMA. The Joint SHMA covers the local authority areas of Rugby, Coventry, Warwick, North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Stratford-on-Avon and identifies a mid-point of need of 3,750 dpa based on 2011 and 2008 headship rates as representing a reasonable level of provision on which to base the housing needs of the HMA. The preparation of the Joint Coventry and Warwickshire SHMA comes after the withdrawal of the Coventry Core Strategy in 2012, particularly in light of the lack of a consistent and joint approach to meeting the housing needs of the area and a failure to discharge the authority’s Duty to Cooperate.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 4.1.3 Reviewing the housing requirements set out in the Council’s Publication Local Plan and the findings of the joint Coventry and Warwickshire SHMA, Gladman submit that the proposed

housing requirements set out in Policy DS6 are too low to meet the housing needs of the district and are not based on a robust evidence base. Whilst welcoming the preparation of the Coventry and Warwickshire SHMA, we submit that the assessment of the housing needs it provides for the HMA and the district underestimates the level of housing required to support the future demographic needs and economic potential of the area. Whilst the SHMA recognises the need to address market signals, we query whether these have been properly factored in to the future assessment of housing needs, whilst we note the proposed housing needs for the HMA will be insufficient to meet the affordable housing for the area as a whole. We strongly submit that the Council has underestimated the future level of housing that must be provided in the district.

- 4.1.4 Gladman are aware of an independent objective assessment of the housing needs for the Coventry and Warwickshire HMA prepared by consultants Barton Willmore. Incorporating a critique of the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint SHMA, the Coventry and Warwickshire Sub-Regional Housing Study finds that to meet the full objectively assessed needs of the HMA and Warwick District, an overall housing requirement of at least 5,100 dpa, based on an economic-led modelling scenario linked to economic forecasts used in the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan. Barton Willmore find that this level of housing growth would enable demographic needs to be met, forecasted economic growth to be accommodated, sufficient affordable housing to be supplied and make a significant contribution towards addressing adverse market signals in the area. Translated into requirements for individual authorities in the HMA, this would require a housing requirement of 18,000 dwellings to be provided through the Warwick Local Plan, equating to 900 dpa.
- 4.1.5 To be found sound at Examination the Warwick District Local Plan must be based on effective joint working on cross boundary strategic issues. In this regard the Local Plan and the Coventry and Warwickshire SHMA discuss and recognise the issue of cross-boundary housing needs within the HMA and unmet requirements arising from neighbouring authority areas. Policy DS20 specifically describes the work that has taken place between the Council and other authorities within the Coventry and Warwickshire HMA to agree a process for addressing unmet needs from one or more of the HMA authorities should they arise. Outside of the HMA, the Local Plan also identifies that there may be an issue of unmet housing needs arising from the Greater Birmingham area.
- 4.1.6 Whilst welcoming the Council's willingness to work with its neighbouring authorities to address unmet housing needs, Gladman submit that the actions proposed by the Local Plan and the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint Committee are not sufficient. There is already a long-standing and existing acknowledgement that Coventry will be unable to meet the housing needs of the authority in its own administrative area, with a report to the Coventry

and Warwickshire Joint Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014<sup>1</sup> clearly stating that “*there is a significant risk that Coventry City Council will not be able to accommodate 23,600 dwellings (1,180 dpa) within the City boundary*”. The submission draft of Birmingham City Council’s Local Development Plan also identifies an initial shortfall of 29,000 dwellings against its full objectively assessed needs. There is therefore a clear requirement for effective working to be undertaken to address these needs now, and for a positive response through the Local Plan to meet them.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 4.1.7 In light of the need to provide for a higher housing requirement in the district, Gladman submit that Policy DS6 is not positively prepared as it fails to propose a sufficient level of housing to meet Warwick’s needs and those of its surrounding neighbours. The Local Plan is not justified as it is not supported by a robust assessment of the full objectively assessed needs for the district, and is not effective as it fails to adequately address cross-boundary housing issues. In a number of instances the Council’s approach is not consistent with the requirements of the Framework.
- 4.1.8 To be considered sound Gladman submit that the proposed housing requirements set out in the Local Plan should be increased, at least being consistent with the assessment of the district’s housing needs prepared by consultants Barton Willmore. To address the unmet housing needs already acknowledged to exist in relation to Coventry and Birmingham there is need for action to address these unmet needs now, rather than deferring this to future work or a review of the Local Plan.
- 4.1.9 In light of our concerns over the adequacy of the Council’s proposed housing requirement, Gladman reserve the right to undertake an independent objective assessment of the authority’s housing needs, consistent with the requirements of the Framework and the PPG on Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments, and submit this to the Local Plan Examination.

## **5 POLICY DS7 – MEETING THE HOUSING REQUIREMENT**

### **Policy Overview**

- 5.1.1 Policy DS7 sets out the anticipated supply of housing to meet the Local Plan’s housing requirements. Alongside the number of dwellings already completed and committed, it shows that 393 dwellings are expected to come forward from small urban sites and 269 homes

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<sup>1</sup> Coventry and Warwickshire Duty to Cooperate, Sub-Regional Approach to Delivering the Housing Requirement Report – Coventry and Warwickshire Joint Committee for Economic Growth and Prosperity, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014.



from the consolidation of existing employment areas. A significant proportion of the authority's future housing needs are proposed to be met through sites allocated through the Local Plan, whilst a windfall allowance of 2,485 dwellings for the Plan period is also identified.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 5.1.2 In the first instance, Gladman submit that there is now a need to identify further housing sites in Warwick, over and above those already identified through the Local Plan, consistent with the need meet a higher housing requirement to meet the authority's full objectively assessed needs. If the Council cannot demonstrate a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable housing sites to meet the authority's housing needs over the Plan period, the Local Plan cannot be considered to be effective.
- 5.1.3 It is the case that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply. As shown in the Council's most recent Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment report published in July 2013, the Council could only demonstrate a 2.8 year supply against the authority's previous emerging Local Plan target of 683 dpa. Whilst the Local Plan Housing Trajectory paper shows that more commitments have since come forward in the district, based on making up the delivery that has already occurred since the start of the Local Plan period over the next five years and factoring in a 20% buffer for persistent under-delivery, we question whether the Council will not be able to demonstrate a five-year supply against its proposed requirement going forward. If sites proposed to be allocated through the Local Plan are taken into consideration, this is still likely to be the case.
- 5.1.4 The Council's strategy is heavily reliant on the delivery of three large SUEs on Land West of Europa Way, Land South of Harbury Lane and East of Kenilworth. Collectively these are anticipated to deliver 3,395 dwellings, representing 54% of the sites to be allocated through the Local Plan. Whilst supporting the general principle of SUEs and their sustainability benefits, Gladman submit that these sites can often be slow to come forward, delivering housing at a slower rate than originally anticipated and failing to deliver the level of homes originally envisaged. The Council should therefore ensure that it has allowed for sufficient contingency in the Local Plan housing supply, providing flexibility for sites that do not come forward as planned.
- 5.1.5 Whilst recognising the ability for local authorities to make an allowance for windfall sites in their housing land supply, Gladman remind the Council that it must ensure that its windfall assumptions are appropriately justified and based on a robust understanding of how windfall sites are likely to continue to come forward, alongside other identified commitments and housing allocations.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 5.1.6 Gladman submit that in its current form the Local Plan is not effective, as it fails to identify sufficient deliverable and developable housing sites that can come forward over the Plan period to meet the authority’s full objectively assessed needs. It is the case that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Whilst recognising that further commitments have come forward since the publication of the Council’s latest Five Year Housing Land Supply Assessment report and the envisaged supply of housing provided through the Local Plan, we submit that this is likely to continue to be the case. Whilst recognising that the Local Plan already provides an element of flexibility in its proposed housing supply, we submit that this will not be sufficient to meet the authority’s housing needs.
- 5.1.7 To be found sound at Examination Gladman submit that there is now a need to identify further deliverable and developable sites in the district, and in particular that can forward in the short term in sustainable locations to meet the authority’s housing needs. We remind the Council that if it is not able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply at the time of the Local Plan’s adoption, its policies for the supply of housing will be out-of-date as soon as they are intended to come into effect.

## **6 POLICY DS10 – BROAD LOCATION OF ALLOCATED HOUSING SITES**

### **Policy Overview**

- 6.1.1 Policy DS10 sets out the broad locations of allocated housing sites within the District. It directs 1,330 dwellings to brownfield sites within the urban areas of the district’s settlements, 850 dwellings to greenfield sites on the edge of Kenilworth, 3,245 dwellings to greenfield locations on the edge of Warwick, Leamington and Whitnash, and 763 dwellings to sites within the districts Growth Villages and the rural area.
- 6.1.2 The Local Plan explains that the proposed spatial strategy aims to meet the housing needs of the district by allocating sites across the towns and in the more sustainable villages. It seeks to maximise the use of brownfield land by directing allocations to previously developed sites in the urban areas in the first instance, bring forward greenfield sites where these are in sustainable locations, and avoid coalescence between the district’s settlements. It sets out that sites in the Green Belt will be limited to those locations where exceptional circumstances can be justified.

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**Policy Analysis**

- 6.1.3 Gladman are generally supportive of the Council’s proposed distribution strategy. Growth should be directed to key towns and villages with established services and facilities, ensuring the creation of sustainable communities that have good access to range of jobs, community facilities, key services and infrastructure. However, the Council should not overlook the need for further development in lower order sustainable settlements that could help to sustain existing services and facilities. In this regard we submit that further growth should be directed to the Council’s identified Growth Villages, particularly in light of the need to provide for a higher level of homes than currently proposed through the Local Plan.
- 6.1.4 Gladman particularly support the identification of Radford Semele as a location for further sustainable growth. Put forward by the Council as one of the district’s Growth Villages, Radford Semele is one of the larger villages in the authority area with a population of nearly 2,000 and just over 800 dwellings. The village benefits from a good range of local services and facilities, including a post office, local shop, community hall, primary school and nursery. The settlement benefits from good public transport links to both Leamington Spa and Southam, where a wider range of employment opportunities and facilities are available.
- 6.1.5 Whilst supporting the Council’s decision to identify Radford Semele as a Rural Service Village, Gladman object to the level of development now proposed to be directed to the settlement. The Council’s previous Local Plan: Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundaries Consultation identified the village as an appropriate location to receive an allocation of 100-150 dwellings, but this has now been reduced to 50 dwellings consistent with the proposed allocation North of Southam Road. Gladman strongly submit there is no robust justification for this change in policy stance. The Council’s May 2013 Draft Settlement Hierarchy Report identified Radford Semele as an appropriate location to receive 100-150 dwellings. There is no basis for this figure to now be reduced based on the capacity of the North of Southam Road Allocation.
- 6.1.6 Radford Semele is not washed over by Green Belt or any other landscape designations. Although its development is constrained by an Area of Restraint that seeks to prevent the coalescence of the village with neighbouring urban areas, it is less constrained than many other settlements within the district and has the ability to support further development. Although Gladman are aware that the Council has now undertaken further work to assess the sensitivity of the landscape around the village to further development, we submit that there are no justifiable reasons that would preclude Radford Semele from accommodating further sustainable development that could come forward in the short term to meet the district’s housing needs. In this regard we submit that the development targets for the village should be increased to at least 180 dwellings.

- 6.1.7 Whilst generally supporting the Council’s aim to maximise the reuse of previously developed land, Gladman would be opposed to the re-use of previously developed land if this would preclude development from coming forward on sustainable greenfield sites. Whilst §111 of the Framework states that planning policies should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has previously been developed, it does not state that brownfield development should be prioritised.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 6.1.8 Whilst generality supportive of the Council’s proposed distribution strategy, Gladman submit that more growth should be directed to the district’s Growth Villages, and particularly in light of the need to provide for a higher level of homes in the district. Whilst particularly supporting the identification of Radford Semele as a location for further growth, we submit that there is no justifiable basis to now reduce the level of residential development to be directed to the village.
- 6.1.9 There is no reason why Radford Semele cannot accommodate further sustainable development that could come forward in the short term. In this regard we submit that the housing targets for the village should now be increased to at least 180 homes.

## **7 POLICY DS11 – ALLOCATED HOUSING SITES**

### **Policy Overview**

- 7.1.1 Policy DS11 sets out the specific housing sites that will be allocated through the Local Plan. Consistent with the Council’s proposed spatial strategy it identifies sites within and on the edge of the main urban areas of Warwick, Leamington Spa, Whitnash and Kenilworth and allocations for the district’s identified Growth Villages. The Policy also makes provision for a site to be allocated on the edge of Coventry.
- 7.1.2 The Council previously consulted on its proposed site allocations in the district’s Growth Villages through the Local Plan: Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundaries Consultation in November 2013. Through this consultation and with particular regard to Radford Semele, the Council identified Land to the East of Church Lane as their preferred option to provide a housing site in the village. However, citing comments received to the Local Plan: Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundaries Consultation and further work that has now been undertaken on landscape quality and sensitivity, the authority’s preferred allocation in the village has now been amended to Land North of Southam Road.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 7.1.3 Gladman have previously made clear our strong support for the Council’s decision to promote Land to the East of Church Lane, Radford Semele, as their preferred locations for a future allocation within the village. Alongside site-specific representations prepared by Stansgate Planning, we submitted that this represented a wholly sustainable and suitable location for further residential development to accommodate a proposal of up to 130 homes. We highlighted that there were no significant constraints to bringing the site forward that could not be overcome through an appropriately planned scheme.
- 7.1.4 In light of our previous representations, Gladman therefore strongly object to the decision to now withdraw Land to the East of Church Lane as the Council’s preferred location for further development in the village. Whilst we are aware of the further work undertaken by the Council to assess landscape quality and sensitivity around Radford Semele, we object to the results of this assessment in relation to development on Land to the East of Church Lane, which indicates only a small portion of this land could be developed. As clearly demonstrated through a number of technical studies prepared for our recent planning application for the site, a scheme of up to 130 dwellings can come forward in this location whilst still respecting the setting and views of St Nicholas Church and the landscape character of the site.
- 7.1.5 Land to the East of Church Lane represents a wholly sustainable location for residential development. The site is considered to be deliverable as it is available now, offers a suitable location for development and is achievable. Gladman submit that there are no justifiable reasons as to why the site could not come forward in the short term to help meet the district’s housing needs.
- 7.1.6 In line with our previous representations and site submissions to the Council, further detailed representations on Land to the East of Church Lane, Radford Semele have been prepared on Gladman’s behalf by Stansgate Planning. These representations further demonstrate the suitability of site for residential development and should be read alongside this submission.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 7.1.7 Gladman object to the Council’s decision to now withdraw Land to the East of Church Lane as their preferred location for an allocation in Radford Semele. We have previously demonstrated that this site represents a wholly sustainable and suitable location for further development to meet the authority’s housing needs. In the process of preparing a planning application for the site, Gladman have prepared a number of technical studies which clearly demonstrate that there are no significant constraints that would preclude a development of

up to 130 dwellings from coming forward on the site. On this basis we strongly question the findings of the Council’s landscape quality and sensitivity assessments for the site.

- 7.1.8 Gladman submit that Land to the East of Church Lane, Radford Semele, should now be reallocated for a development of up to 130 dwellings, to meet the authority’s housing needs.

## **8 POLICY DS20 – ACCOMMODATING HOUSING NEED ARISING FROM OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT**

### **Policy Overview**

- 8.1.1 Policy DS20 sets out the measures the Council propose to implement in the context of addressing unmet housing needs. It outlines that the existence of unmet needs outside of district will not render the Plan out of date, but that the Plan will be reviewed if evidence demonstrates that significant housing needs arising outside the district should be met within the district and cannot be adequately addressed without a review. To establish this, it sets out that the Council will work with other local authorities in the Coventry and Warwickshire HMA to prepare a joint evidence base on housing need, agree a strategic approach to address any shortfall in land availability to deliver the full objectively assessed need, and where evidence and the Duty to Cooperate clearly indicates that unmet needs would be most appropriately met in the district, seek to meet these needs and review the Local Plan.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 8.1.2 As highlighted previously in this representation, whilst welcoming the sentiment of Policy DS20 we submit that its provisions are not sufficient to address the unmet housing needs that are already acknowledged to exist outside of the district. There is a clear need for action to be taken to address these needs now, rather than deferring them to future joint working or a review of the Local Plan. We further query the statement in Policy DS20 that unmet needs will not render the Local Plan out-of-date. Once the Local Plan comes into effect the Council is still obliged to work with its neighbouring authorities on an ongoing basis to address unmet housing needs.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 8.1.3 Whilst welcoming the provisions of Policy DS20, Gladman submit that the measures it proposes are insufficient to address the unmet housing needs that are already acknowledged to exist outside of the district. If the Council does not make adequate

provision to assess and address these needs now we submit that Policy DS20 and the Local Plan cannot be considered positively prepared or effective.

## **9 POLICY H2 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

### **Policy Overview**

- 9.1.1 Policy H2 sets out the Council’s proposed approach to securing the provision of affordable housing through residential developments. It sets out that development will not be permitted unless provision is made for 40% affordable housing of sites of 10 or more dwellings, or 0.3 ha or more within the urban areas, and on sites of 5 or more dwellings or 0.17 ha within rural areas.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 9.1.2 The council should ensure that its affordable housing requirements are based on robust evidence, taking account of development viability. In this regard we note that the authority’s most recent Affordable Housing Viability Study was published in 2011, with a further addendum prepared in 2012. Gladman are concerned as to whether this evidence is now out-of-date and still adequate to support the Local Plan’s proposals.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 9.1.3 In light of the time that has passed since the publication of the Council’s affordable housing viability evidence, we query whether this is still up to date and sufficient to support the approach set out in Policy H2.

## **10 POLICY SC0 – SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

### **Policy Overview**

- 10.1.1 Policy SC0 sets out the Council’s overarching policy on delivering sustainable communities. It sets out that new development should be of high quality and should be brought forward in a way which enables strong communities to be formed and sustained. To meet the policy’s aims, a number of specific criteria against which proposals will be assessed are proposed.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 10.1.2 Gladman support the principle of delivering high quality development, however we are concerned that the provisions of Policy SC0 are overly onerous and could place an undue burden on the ability to deliver sustainable development. We note that Policy BE1 Layout and Design also outlines a set of prescriptive policy requirements against which the design of proposals will be assessed.

**Conclusions on Soundness**

- 10.1.3 Gladman submit that it would now be sensible to consolidate the requirements of Policies SC0 and BE1, other Local Plan requirements related to the layout and design of developments, into a single policy.

**11 POLICY BE2 – DEVELOPING STRATEGIC HOUSING SITES****Policy Overview**

- 11.1.1 Policy BE2 sets out that development sites of over 200 dwellings, or sites which form part of a wider development area which exceeds 200 dwellings, or other developments which have a significant impact on the character and appearance of an area, will be expected to comply with a development brief. The Policy outlines a set of specific requirements that should be contained within such development briefs, which includes densities – that should not be lower than 30 dwellings per hectare average.

**Policy Analysis**

- 11.1.2 Whilst recognising the need for developments on larger sites to come forward in a coordinated manner, Gladman query whether it will always be necessary to prepare a development brief for this purpose and whether the objectives of this policy cannot be better achieved through the preparation of a site masterplan or development framework. In relation to sites densities, we submit that it would be more appropriate to determine site densities at a level that is consistent with a site’s character and location, rather than setting a minimum target.

**Conclusions on Soundness**

- 11.1.3 Gladman submit that in its current form the provisions of Policy BE2 are too prescriptive. We submit that in some instances it would be more appropriate to prepare a site masterplan or development framework for proposals, as opposed to a site development brief. Gladman would be opposed to setting minimum site densities.

**12 POLICY CC3 – BUILDING STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS****Policy Overview**

- 12.1.1 Policy CC3 sets out that all new dwellings will be required to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 from the date of adopting the Local Plan and Level 5 from 2016. It outlines that the Council will expect applicants to consider the potential to incorporate large scale decentralised district heating networks on the strategic sites identified through the Plan.



Applicants will be required to prepare a Sustainable Buildings Statement to demonstrate how their proposals meet the requirements of the Local Plan’s climate change policies.

### **Policy Analysis**

- 12.1.2 Gladman submit that the requirements set out in Policy CC3 are too onerous. It is unclear whether they are justified by a supporting evidence base and have been properly tested for their effects on viability. In this regard Gladman remind the council of the guidance set out in §173 of the Framework, which states that “*Plans should be deliverable. Therefore, the sites and scale of development identified in the Plan should not be subject to such a scale of policy obligations that their ability to be developed viably is threatened*”.

### **Conclusions on Soundness**

- 12.1.3 Whilst recognising the aims of this policy, Gladman question whether its requirements are appropriately justified. There is risk that its provisions could threaten the viability of development and consequently the delivery of the Local Plan.

## **13 CONCLUSIONS**

- 13.1.1 Through these representations Gladman have raised a number of issues in relation to the soundness of the Warwick District Local Plan in its current form. Some of these concerns relate to issues that are fundamental to the strategy that underpins the Plan. Therefore in its current form we submit that the document cannot be considered sound.
- 13.1.2 Gladman critically submit that the Council appears to be progressing a housing requirement that is too low to meet the full objectively needs for the district and is not supported by an adequate evidence base, whilst existing evidence of unmet housing needs in the Coventry and Warwickshire Housing Market Area (HMA) and adjacent authority areas requires formal arrangements and actions to be implemented to address these needs now, rather than deferring them to a future review of the Local Plan or subsequent. Critically we submit that there is now a need to identify further housing sites in the district, over and above those already proposed to be allocated through the Local Plan, to meet the area’s housing needs.
- 13.1.3 Gladman have previously highlighted our support for the decision to identify Radford Semele as an appropriate location for further residential development as one of the district’s ten Growth Villages. We therefore strongly object to the Council’s decision to now reduce the level of development proposed to be directed to the village, consistent with the capacity of the proposed allocation to the North of Southam Road. We further submit that there is no justification for this change in policy stance or justifiable reason why Land to the East of Church Lane should not be allocated through the Local Plan.

13.1.4 To be considered sound at Examination the Local Plan needs to meet all four of the soundness tests set out in paragraph 182 of the Framework:

*"A local planning authority should submit a Plan for Examination which they consider is 'sound' – namely that it is:*

- **Positively prepared** – *the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet the objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;*
- **Justified** – *the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;*
- **Effective** – *the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross boundary strategic priorities; and*
- **Consistent with national policy** – *the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with policies in the Framework."*

13.1.5 In its current form Gladman submit that the Warwick District Local Plan **has not been positively prepared** as it is not based on a strategy which seeks to meet the objectively assessed housing needs of the district. As demonstrated through these representations we submit that there is now a need to provide for a higher level of homes in the district than currently proposed through the Local Plan, whilst there is a clear need for the Local Plan to take account of unmet housing needs that it is acknowledged will arise from Coventry.

13.1.6 The Joint Core Strategy **is not justified**. It has not been informed by an adequate objective assessment of Warwick District's housing needs, provided by the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint SHMA. Gladman are aware of more recent evidence that points to the need to provide for a higher level of homes in the district to meet the area's economic aspirations and potential, whilst questioning the Joint SHMA's methodology and findings.

13.1.7 As proposed the Local Plan **is not effective**. We submit that there is now a need to identify further deliverable and developable housing sites in the district, over and above those already identified through the Local Plan, to meet the authority's full objectively assessed needs and ensure a continuous supply of housing over the Plan period. The Local Plan is not based on effective joint working on cross-boundary housing needs.

13.1.8 As demonstrated through these representations in a number of instances the Local Plan **is not consistent with national policy** and as such is inherently unsound. Key areas of inconsistency include that the Local Plan will not result in a strategy that "meets the full,

*objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing” (paragraph 47), is not “based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area” (paragraph 158) , whilst the Council has not met the requirements of paragraph 179 of the Framework, which states that “Joint working should enable local planning authorities to work together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas”.*

- 13.1.9 As proposed Gladman submit that the Warwick District Local Plan is contrary to national policy and should not be found sound at Examination.