

Matter No. 6B

Sites GB1 and GB2, Worts' Causeway

Representor: David Cottee

for Fulbourn Forum for community action

Personal Ref: 4296

The proposal to build up to 480 homes on the two sites either side of Worts' Causeway (14.8ha in total) is unsound as it fails the four primary soundness criteria, being:

1. not positively prepared
2. not justified
3. not effective and
4. not consistent with national policy

The proposal is **not positively prepared** and **not justified** as the inclusion of these two Green Belt sites for housing in the Local Plan is fundamentally an extreme response to achieve housing numbers. These sites would provide only around 3% of the projected housing need in Cambridge, so the 'very special circumstances' required to justify harm to land of high Green Belt value do not exist.

Given the statutory requirement of the City and South Cambs to 'cooperate' and their Memorandum of Understanding, this relatively small amount of housing growth, if found to be necessary within the Plan period, should be targeted towards non Green belt locations as part of the overall strategy across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

The proposal is **not effective** as the two sites are not conveniently close to existing services and facilities (shops, chemist, health centre, schools etc.) or particularly well-sited in relation to existing public transport routes. Its roads would lead onto the narrow Worts' Causeway where the need for roadside parking at the Hills Road end will result in congestion and inadequate facilities for a safe cycling route.

The proposal is **not consistent with national policy** (NPPF) as it fails to meet several of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. This proposed development is adjacent to some of the best rural landscape surrounding Cambridge which contains, uniquely for Cambridge, undulating and rising ground, some of it wooded, and with narrow rural roads. The view from the high ground of Shelford Road as it descends towards Worts' Causeway shows a well-defined, hard urban edge of low density houses with the lower fields providing an important visual and physical buffer between the urban fabric and the Gog Magog hills. These sites perform the important Green Belt function of maintaining a soft green edge to the city that contributes positively to the landscape setting and special character of this side of Cambridge. In addition, the Green Belt is there to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment – this present proposal runs contrary to those purposes.

It is inevitable that, should these sites be allowed, then they will be among the first to be developed in the City as they are open and green field. Subsequently, the important purpose of the Green Belt in encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land will be ineffective.

David Cottee

For Fulbourn Forum for community action

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