

## **Matters 6A and 6B of the Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridge Local Plan Examinations – Claire and Hugh Beattie**

### **Matter 6A General Issues**

In general terms we do not think that a policy of reducing the size of the Cambridge Green Belt by permitting development upon can fairly be described as ‘sustainable development’ [i.e. in the National Policy Planning Framework’s terms, as protecting the Green Belt except in exceptional circumstances], because the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans have not shown that the circumstances are exceptional.

### **Matter 6B Green Belt**

We understand that in this regard we may comment on two questions:

1. What would be the impact of the proposed Green Belt boundary changes on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt?
2. Are there any other reasons why the development of these sites should be resisted or any overriding constraints to development?

**As regards the first question** we suggest that the proposed changes, particularly in relation to land on both sides of Worts Causeway, run directly counter to the purposes of the Green Belt. In particular:

1.1. Since releasing this land for development would mean encroachment on the countryside, it cannot assist in safeguarding it from encroachment; indeed it would send a precedent for further intrusion into the countryside around Cambridge (for which we understand developers are already pressing).

1.2 Development on this land would not preserve the setting and special character of this part of Cambridge; such development would for example be visible from the higher ground to the east, and from roads and railway to the south (partly for this reason a proposal to remove its Green Belt status was rejected in 2006).

1.3 It would do nothing to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict land.

**2. As regards the second question**, there are several reasons why Green Belt protection should not be removed from land along Worts Causeway in particular:

2.1 Traffic – this is already very heavy on the Babraham Road, into which Worts Causeway feeds, particularly during rush hours (and the new development on the south side of the Babraham Road on the former Bell Language school site will further increase traffic on this stretch of the road). The extent of the rush-hour traffic was recognised some years ago and rising bollards (bus gate) were installed on Worts Causeway to make it possible for buses from the Park and Ride site on the Babraham Road to avoid some of the congestion. Inevitably housing along Worts Causeway will considerably increase this.

2.2 Biodiversity – it does not appear that the Council has carried out a really thorough

Habitats Regulations Assessment, merely dismissing the sites as of little value to plant and animal and bird life. For example:

2.2.1 In proposing the release of CB1 and CB2 for development, it seems that for instance it failed to take full account of the need the protection of the substantial hedgerows on the south side – there is only a vague reference to an ecological corridor. In any case the value of such corridors in protecting biodiversity remains to be established - there is ‘a dearth of hard evidence to support their ecological efficacy’ (Evans, J.P., ‘Wildlife Corridors: An Urban Political Ecology’, *Local Environment*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp.129-152, April 2007).

2.2.2 In particular no proper plans that we are aware of have been advanced for protection of the rare barbastelle bats which roost in the neighbourhood. These bats are covered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1982 (as amended) Schedules 5 and 6 (and also appear in the Berne Convention and the Bonn Convention (see

<http://adlib.eversite.co.uk/adlib/defra/content.aspx?id=000IL3890W.16NTC1C85IU2VU>)

2.2.3 Loss of amenity – walking, running and cycling along the footpath along Worts Causeway and along the Causeway itself is not just enjoyed by people who live in the immediate neighbourhood. Development along Worts Causeway would adversely impact on this. The plan refers to providing a green link into Cambridge, but this already exists in the form of the footpath along the south side of Worts Causeway, and the proposed development will spoil it.

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Claire Beattie’s representations:

21994, 21981, 27119, 27016, 27020, 27023, 27027, 27032, 27034, 27038, 27047, 27050, 27119.

Hugh Beattie’s representations:

26257, 26424, 26427, 26909, 26911, 26913, 26927, 26936, 26940, 26947, 28363