



# LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

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## Informative Paper for Discussion Session

### Local Access Forum Meeting to be held in Shire Hall Warwick Thursday 25 July 2024.

I was invited, by IM Properties PLC, Solihull, to attend a workshop held on 14 May 2024, on behalf of the Joint Local Access Forum, relating to the proposal below.

Representatives from WCC, the British Horse Society, the Canal and River Trust and the Ramblers were also present.

A copy of the presentation given during the workshop plus a map from page 6 of the document, a copy of the National Planning Policy Framework Policy 2023(NPPF), a recent Government Statement dated 15 May 2024 and a Cambridge University Research Paper plus a Summary Paper on Net Gain.

### **Thrive – a next generation employment campus on land under our control at Junction 9 of the M42 in North Warwickshire.**

The NPPF 2023 and a recent Government Statement, dated 15 May 2024, a copy of the Thrive Presentation and map, page 6, showing proposed site with constraints marked, are attached for information.

*Attempts, by developers, to circumnavigate material planning considerations, relate to this and too many similar proposals. The negative impacts 'constraints' have on road safety, the loss of our ability to produce food for UK consumption, loss of irreplaceable ecology and biodiversity and effects on the wellbeing of local residents, are cumulative. If unchallenged speculative development, purely for profit, without open and transparent consideration of weighty planning issues including preservation of ancient public rights of way, protecting productive green belt land and sustainability of local infrastructure, spells short and long-term disaster.*

- The proposed site is on ever diminishing productive agricultural land in an open Green Belt and agricultural landscape.
- The site will have a negative impact on the protection of long-term UK food security and conserving and preserving our best and most versatile productive agricultural land.
- Lower grade agricultural land is still capable of producing high yield cropping which can bolster home-grown food production and help with the carbon emergency by reducing the carbon impact of importation of food.
- Government is realising that moving towards independent certification of soil surveying to prevent manipulation and downgrading of large portions of highly productive land, by developers, in an attempt to make it appear less viable for food production.
- Loss of amenity and disruption for local residents from encroachment.

- Financially speculative development for profit targets greenfield and green belt sites for ease of construction at the expense of the local environment, ecology, ecosystems and biodiversity.
- Policy states previously developed, brownfield, contaminated and underutilised land should come first. However, it is easier and more profitable for developers to use Green Belt and greenfield land. No compelling evidence to show investigation of availability of brownfield and other underutilised land has been undertaken.
- NPPF Policy believes in preserving the openness and permanence of the Green Belt unless very special or exceptional circumstances exist which outweighed the inappropriateness.
- The fundamental aim of NPPF Policy is to restrict urban sprawl and encroachment by keeping land permanently open and to preserve the essential characteristics of Green Belt and greenfield landscapes.
- Preventing the cumulative negative impacts of inappropriate development are NPPF Policy - Ref: NPPF 13 (page 42) - Protecting Green Belt Land – 142 - 156).
- The above proposal will diminish the amenity value and openness of several ancient public rights of way which will have to be diverted.
- The proposed development demands the permanent closure of the ancient Blind Pit Lane.
- An industrial sized development will cause dangerous and unwelcome increases in commercial and private traffic accessing and egressing the site from narrow country lanes causing cumulative and safety impacts to the local and national highway network infrastructure.
- All commercial development should demonstrate a comprehensive range of renewable energy sustainability, which the proposed site does not.
- The proposed industrial sized development constructed on a significant parcel of open, ever-diminishing Green Belt land will have a negative and cumulative impact on the ecology and biodiversity of open agricultural land and its habitats.
- The development will also cause negative impacts to the openness and recreational amenity of the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, its towpath and specialist and often legally protected wildlife species and their habitats.
- The onus is on the developer to demonstrate very special or exceptional circumstances exist which outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposal.

## **Open Discussion**

**Sheila Cooper**

