



Your ref:  
Our ref: GH/JC/1072

29 July 2013

Dave Barber  
Warwick District Council  
Riverside House  
Milverton Hill  
Leamington Spa  
CV32 5HQ

**By Email and Post**

Dear Mr Barber

**REVISED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (RDS) CONSULTATION: REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF BARWOOD STRATEGIC LAND II LLP**

As you know we act for Barwood and I am instructed to submit detailed representations to the Council's Revised Development Strategy (RDS). HOW's representations and the requisite form accompany the electronic version of this letter; the appendices are extensive and too large to email, and so a complete set will follow in both hard copy and CD form for your convenient use shortly.

Barwood object to the RDS on a number of grounds, including that The Asps site is no longer identified for large scale residential led development. The decision not to carry forward the sites allocation from that set out in the Preferred Options appears largely to have been founded on the basis of advice from the Council's Landscape Consultant (RMA) and views expressed by English Heritage (EH), the latter of which was a consultee on the Preferred Options.

Barwood's appointed professional team has carried out extensive baseline assessment embracing landscape, archaeology and heritage issues amongst others. This work is captured in a number of technical reports which are appended to our representations. In the interests of transparency, these reports have previously been shared with EH and the Council, and we are aware that EH wrote a further letter to the Council setting out its views on 23 May 2013.

Since being provided by you with a copy of that letter (at the end of June) it has become apparent to Barwood's team that EH had not reviewed all the evidence sent to it, and this may explain much of the tenor of the letter. In particular EDP's Heritage Setting Assessment had unfortunately not been seen by EH in formulating its response to the Council. EH's views must therefore be read in this context; a further (updated) copy of the Setting report has recently been sent to EH and we are aiming (through EDP) to have on-going engagement with EH over coming months.



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Barwood is strongly of the view that the evidence it has gathered demonstrates clearly that The Asps site has the capacity, in landscape and heritage terms, to accommodate major built development. Indeed in many respects it would be preferable to some of the sites identified in the Council's RDS which, if developed in line with the indicative masterplans accompanying some of the previous outline planning applications, will be likely to have more harmful effects than a sensitive development of The Asps itself.

Barwood supports the spatial dimension of the Council's emerging plan, with its focus on land to the south of Warwick/Leamington. It also supports the conclusions of the Strategic Highway Assessments carried out by WCC, which demonstrate the ability of the highway network to accommodate likely levels of traffic generation, provided appropriate mitigation is in place. The key issue therefore is not whether south Warwick/Leamington is the most appropriate location to focus significant growth, nor (in broad terms) the overall level of growth planned there. The central issue is what is the most appropriate configuration of sites and development within that area which can deliver the Council's objectives whilst minimising impacts on the landscape and surrounding designated heritage assets. We believe The Asps has a key role to play in this.

Barwood consider that there would be merit in an holistic, masterplan approach across the wider area of south Warwick/Leamington, including The Asps site, to identify the true environmental capacities of the various parcels of land and how, collectively, these might be developed in the least impactful way. This would be, in effect, an extension of the environmentally-led approach Barwood has already adopted in respect of the land it controls at The Asps.

We would be happy to discuss this further, as well as the other issues raised in our representations, and look forward to a constructive dialogue with the Council and other stakeholders, notably EH, going forward.

Would you kindly acknowledge safe receipt of our representations.

Yours sincerely



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Encls.

cc: Rebecca Mitchell, Barwood