

## **Appendix I**

### **Extract from 1994 Inspectors Report on the 1993 Local Plan for Site 1 North of Southam Road**

#### **Objections by Bryant Homes**

##### **Summary of Objections**

The Objectors made three representations:-

- i. In support of the principle of Policy (DW)H1, but Objecting to the proposed allocations as insufficient to meet the housing requirements of the Structure plan and to the level of the windfall supply anticipated, which were thought to have been overestimated.
- ii. Objecting to the omission of land at Southam Road from the housing allocations, and
- iii. Objecting to the village envelope and to the boundary of the Area of Restraint.

2.2.337. The first of the Objections has been considered earlier. The Objectors conclusion was that there is a need to provide for more allocations in the Plan. The site concerned in the second Objection is situated on the northern edge of Radford Semele between Southam Road and the former railway. About 9 ha in extent it is divided by Church Lane into two parts, a smaller field of about 1.4 ha to the west and a larger field of about 7.5 ha to the east. The Lane serves St Nicholas's Church and the adjacent Radford Hall, the substantial farm buildings of which have been converted for residential use and a small estate of modern detached houses added.

2.2.338. The Objections site, along with the Church, but not the development around Radford Hall, are excluded from the village envelope and taken into the Area of Restraint. It was considered that this land would represent a logical extension to the village, being well related to its main features and its historic core. The site is well contained and development would not intrude into the open countryside. The village as a whole has a good service base and good access to the nearby urban area. The proposals for development could include the use of the land adjoining the Church as a village green, maintaining the present views across open land to the Church from Southam Road and Offchurch Lane.

2.2.339. No justification was seen for including this land in the Area of Restraint. To the north of the village is the River Learn and beyond that the Green Belt. The Structure Plan did not contemplate an Area of Restraint in this vicinity and at this point it is not defining the urban area, nor has it

any importance to the structure of Leamington and Warwick. With the Green Belt coming to the northern bank it is not necessary to protect the river valley. Such protection as is needed on environmental or landscape grounds could be achieved through the normal development control processes. It was accepted that the site could accommodate up to 150 houses and that this would put the proposal outside the scope of Policy (OW)H8, but it was considered that the need to allocate more land for housing, and the suitability of this site, effectively within the village and outside the Green Belt, for the purpose was a justification for its allocation.

### **Council's Response**

2.2.340. The Council saw the Objection site as an attractive area of land separated clearly and distinctly from the main

area of the village to the south of Southern Road. The housing area to the west of the Church is small and largely concealed. There are views from Southam Road across the site to the open countryside surrounding the village and the land provides a setting for the Church. From Church Lane the rural surroundings of the Church are even more apparent.

2.2.341. The village has seen considerable development over recent years and this site and the setting it provides for the northern part of the village are one of the last remaining connections with its rural past. The site is not properly part of the village, being wholly peripheral, the housing in Offchurch Lane with which the development would connect being itself a ribbon extending into the countryside. The land is Grade 3a and it could be anticipated that there would be an objection to the loss of land of this quality. The village green proposed by the Objectors would not replace this rural setting provided by this agricultural land and would be surrounded by housing which would extend close to the Church. The green itself would be likely at a later date to come under pressure for further development.

2.2.342. The Council believed that the site would not relate well in scale and location to the village or be well integrated with the pattern of development as the advice requires. If developed, it would, rather, be detached from the village, severed by the main road. It was considered that a sufficient variety of housing sites had been provided in the Plan without the need to allocate this land.

2.2.343. The Council was satisfied that including this land in the Area of Restraint was helping to further the objective of maintaining the separation of Leamington Spa and Radford Semele. The Structure Plan established the principle of an Area of Restraint in this area, but left it to the Plan to define the boundaries. Along Redford Road the effectiveness of the separation is weakened by the presence of industrial buildings and it is the open land to the north of the road that reinforces the gap. The open land extending to the north of Southern Road and Offchurch Lane is only broken by the outlier of development around Radford Hall and the Church.

The proposals would close much of this open outlook and in so doing affect the impression of the separation of Leamington and Redford Semele.

2.2.344. Policy (DW)H8 is founded in the Structure Plan Policies G1(3) and G3. References to the built-up area relate to the existing extent of building, within which it may be possible to identify sites for single or small groups of dwellings. Larger peripheral sites are not included unless they are allocated for development. The Council has seen no need to allocate sites in the villages of the rural area to meet Structure Plan requirements. Development in all villages is, therefore, effectively confined to the built-up area, if it is to be permitted at all.

### **Conclusions**

2.2.345. As in the previous Objections, it is not accepted that there is a need to allocate land for residential development at Radford Semele at this time and the site is not of a nature that can reasonably be included in a village envelope defined under Policy (OW)HS. The principal issue is whether it should be omitted from the Area of Restraint, to allow for the possibility of future growth of the village.

2.2.346. I mentioned in relation to the last Objections that the scope for the further expansion of the village is limited to small areas to the west and to the south. The land to the east is of greater landscape significance and generally more exposed, while it also includes a high element of the better quality agricultural land. This site is also of good quality, if of lesser value, and this would clearly be a factor to be taken into account if development were proposed. It, nevertheless, remains an area in which the village could extend.

2.2.347. I accept the Council's point that the value of the Area of Restraint in separating Sydenham and Redford Semele is enhanced by its extension in the vicinity of the industrial buildings on the north eastern side of Radford Road. I was, however, unable to see this value extending to the Objection land, which is largely cut off from this main part of the Area of Restraint by the development around Redford Hall. The other Area of Restraint that joins it at this point protects the River Leam as it flows through Leamington, but here it has left the built-up area. The purposes of the Areas of Restraint would seem to be fully served if the boundary were drawn along the former railway to the point where the river, railway and canal come together and the remaining land, including the Objection site, omitted, to be protected by countryside policies.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

2.2.348. That the boundary of the Areas of Restraint be drawn to omit the Objection site, as suggested above.