

JEREMY WRIGHT MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Dave Barber
Development Policy Manager
Warwick District Council
Riverside House
Milverton Hill
Leamington Spa CV32 5HZ

18th January 2014

Dear Mr Barber,

Re: Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundary Consultation

I am pleased to submit my comments on Warwick District Council's preferred housing allocation options. My response to the consultation on the Revised Development Strategy, contained in my letter of 29th July 2013, gives a clear indication of my views on the Council's overall approach and these views remain unchanged. I take this opportunity to comment on the specific proposals presented in the consultation, based on the representations that I have received from my constituents.

The majority of representations I have received relate to Radford Semele. Correspondents have expressed initial concerns about the rejection of sites that were initially proposed by the Parish Council and the adoption of a preferred site that had not been previously considered. The reasons as to why this decision has been reached by the Council and why this site has been given preference over the original sites need to be stated clearly.

A number of constituents have also questioned the ability of the local infrastructure to absorb a development of this size. The potential for traffic congestion is a particular concern. Heavy traffic is already an issue at peak times and the proximity of the local primary school gives rise to road safety concerns. Drainage and sewerage systems are limited and often struggle to cope with surface water following heavy rain. Constituents have also suggested that it will only be possible to accommodate the number of houses projected for the site through a housing density that is much higher than that of the rest of the village.

There is also a widespread view that this development will substantially affect the rural character of the village. Many correspondents have highlighted the detrimental effect that the development will have on the setting of the nearby St Nicholas' Church, a Grade II listed building. Concerns also exist on impact of the proposals on the natural



environment, particularly in the area of the preferred site closest to the Grand Union Canal.

I have also received representations in respect of the proposals for Hatton Station. The general concerns that have been expressed relate to the proposed settlements encroaching on the Green Belt. This land is of high environmental value and residents are understandably concerned about proposals for development on what is considered to be a protected space. As I have stated in previous responses on the Local Plan, the circumstances which have given rise to consideration of Green Belt land for development need to be made clear.

The proposed sites at Hatton Station encroach on areas that contain an abundance of wildlife and land which is regularly used by locals and by walkers for recreation. The fact that sewerage and drainage systems are currently at capacity is noted, and concerns about the level of provision for other utilities such as electricity, gas and broadband have been raised. The ability of local shops, schools, roads and transport services to safely absorb additional residents is questioned. The Sustainability Appraisal points to other environmental factors where the impact of the proposals is uncertain or requires further analysis. This additional work should be undertaken as a matter of priority if the sustainability of the site is to be established.

The issues that I have highlighted summarise the views of residents who will be directly affected by any potential development, and I hope that they will be given direct consideration when the suitability of these proposals is assessed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeremy Wright".

JEREMY WRIGHT MP