

## Separate Sheet

**Gerald Eve Representations on behalf of Jaguar Land Rover**

**REPRESENTATION RELATING TO MODIFICATION 16: POLICY DS19 GREEN BELT, PARAGRAPH 2.81**

**7. Please give details of why you consider the Proposed Modifications to the Submission Warwick District Local Plan are not legally compliant or are unsound. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Proposed Modifications, please also use this box to set out your comments.**

### **Introduction**

Gerald Eve LLP is instructed to submit representations to the Council's Local Plan Proposed Modifications (2016) in relation to the Former Honiley Airfield, Fen End (hereinafter referred to as 'Fen End') on behalf of our client Jaguar Land Rover.

Jaguar Land Rover acquired the site in September 2014 which has opportunities for future development and economic growth in accordance with the Council's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (March 2014).

This current consultation provides an opportunity to comment on the Council's Local Plan where it is considered the proposed amendments and more recently published pieces of evidence have a bearing on it.

Given the above, this representation provides further comments on draft Policy DS19 Green Belt in light of the publication of new evidence contained in the Joint Strategic Employment Land Study (October 2014).

The following section provides an introduction to Jaguar Land Rover, and a summary of the key aspirations and objectives for future development of the Fen End site followed by detailed representations and comments.

### **Jaguar Land Rover - Company Profile**

Jaguar Land Rover is a global business and the UK's largest automotive employer, creating both direct and indirect jobs within the UK.

Jaguar Land Rover is the UK's largest automotive manufacturing business, and in 2015, sold 487,065 vehicles in 160 markets. More than 80% of vehicles produced are exported, generating revenue of £18.1 billion. In recognition of outstanding performance Jaguar and Land Rover won 180 awards in 2014/15.

Jaguar Land Rover's UK operations take place at various locations, with three vehicle manufacturing plants - two in the West Midlands at Castle Bromwich and Solihull, one is located near to Liverpool in Halewood - and two advanced design and engineering centres at Gaydon (Stratford District) and Whitley (Coventry). There are new facilities located at Fen End, near Kenilworth and Prologis Park in Ryton. Furthermore, Jaguar Land Rover has invested £1 billion in its Engine Manufacturing Centre near Wolverhampton, which opened in 2015. The facility is expected to provide circa 1,400 jobs and construction is underway to add 85,000 sqm of additional floorspace to the manufacturing facility.

In the last five years, Jaguar Land Rover's turnover has tripled and its workforce has more than doubled. The company now employs over 38,000 people with over 35,000 of those people based in the UK.

As well as direct employment, Jaguar Land Rover's activities sustain some 240,000 jobs throughout the UK at dealerships, suppliers and local businesses.

Jaguar Land Rover recognises that continual advancement is critical to maintaining competitive and advancing vehicle design and technology in a sustainable manner. Jaguar Land Rover's commitment to advanced design and technology is reflected in the fact that the company is the biggest UK investor in R&D in the manufacturing sector and is in the 'global top 100 for R&D' spend. This is a responsible approach to ensuring the business grows in the future.

Jaguar Land Rover's innovation is continuous. It invested £3 billion last year in product creation and capital expenditure to bring more new vehicles to market. Over the past three years the business has announced 11,000 new jobs, which is a significant step to helping the government achieve its aim of re-balancing the UK economy and meeting the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Jaguar Land Rover is the UK's largest automotive apprenticeship provider and some 900 apprentices have joined the company in the past five years. Its school Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths programmes engaged around 643,000 young people in the UK last year, including many schools close to its sites. In addition, almost 9,000 of its employees are enrolled in further and higher education.

In addition to the advanced design and engineering centres at Gaydon and Whitley, Jaguar Land Rover has invested heavily in a number of collaborative research and development programmes, in association with other partners and a number of higher education establishments in the West Midlands, to help create a workforce of highly skilled engineers, in an area long-associated with the automotive industry. These projects include the new £150 million National Automotive Innovation Centre at the University of Warwick, which Jaguar Land Rover is creating with partners including, Tata Motors European Technical Centre and WMG (Warwick Manufacturing Group). When this facility opens it will become the innovation and research hub for approximately 1,000 researchers and engineers from Jaguar Land Rover and their academic and supplier partners.

Jaguar Land Rover is not only one of the main employers in the West Midlands, but is an integral part of the manufacturing future of the area and the UK as a whole. It is therefore essential that the business is supported by a facilitative planning framework that allows it to continue to grow.

### **Jaguar Land Rover's Proposals for Fen End**

The existing site at Fen End currently accommodates some of Jaguar Land Rover's product research, vehicle testing and development facilities and includes a test track. The site is a long established employment location dating back to the 1950's, with a history of accommodating land uses relating to the development and testing of motor vehicles since then.

Outline planning permission was granted for development of the site for an advanced engineering research and development campus (Class B1 (Business Uses) for the automotive and motor sport industries, Catalyst Centre, new access road and roundabout, infrastructure, parking and landscaping (including details of the Catalyst building) in 2007. This planning permission was renewed on 1 December 2011. A Reserved Matters application pursuant to the above outline planning permission was granted on 23 October 2014 (reference W/14/1152).

Jaguar Land Rover purchased the site in September 2014 and as part of its planned growth and expansion, Jaguar Land Rover is investing in significant new facilities at Fen End over the plan period. Planning permission was granted in November 2015 for "the erection of a building to accommodate the vehicle operations division of Jaguar Land Rover, and ancillary works including car parking, 'work in progress' storage areas for part-prepared vehicles, amendments to the existing vehicle track circuit, track and infield access, site access, landscaping and other ancillary works" (reference W/15/1419).

The development, which has been implemented, will improve and enhance the working environment, and will result in additional employment opportunities.

### **The Strategic Employment Land Study Update (October 2014)**

The Strategic Employment Land Study (“SELS”) Update (2014) (which was subject of the Warwick Local Plan Focused Consultation) identifies Fen End as a key Strategic Employment Allocation providing 10ha of existing employment land within the District.

The SELS Update provides numerous references to the automotive industry being seen as a key growth sector that will drive the demand for strategic employment sites in the short, medium and longer term. An example of this is provided in paragraph 5.14 of the SELS Update which identifies the automotive and large big box logistics as being the two key growth sectors that will drive the demand for strategic employment sites in the short, medium and long term.

The SELS Update identifies Fen End as a key strategic employment site which can provide a significant contribution to economic growth over the plan period. As set out above, Fen End is now owned and operated by Jaguar Land Rover and has significant potential to provide further advanced facilities to further strengthen the District’s role in the automotive sector.

Paragraph 159 of the NPPF outlines the importance of using an appropriate evidence base (in this case the Joint ELR Update) to inform Local Plan policies and states:

*“Each local planning authority should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about both the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. Local planning authorities should ensure that their assessment of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals.”*

In addition, the NPPF states that local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of business needs within economic markets operation in and across their area. Local authorities are also encouraged to work together with other bodies including county and neighbouring authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and the local business community when preparing and maintaining a robust evidence base. The NPPF asks local authorities to use this evidence base to assess the requirements for employment land and floorspace and the existing and future supply of land available to meet identified needs.

Paragraph 182 of the NPPF states that Local Authorities should submit a plan for examination which it considers is “sound” – namely that it is:

- Positively prepared;
- Justified;
- Effective; and
- Consistent with national policy

It is not considered that draft Policy DS19 as currently drafted has been positively prepared, nor is it consistent with national policy (NPPF) for the reasons set out below.

### **Draft Policy DS19 – Green Belt**

The Council has revised the Green Belt boundary as part of the emerging Local Plan. The explanatory text to Draft Policy DS19 states that a number of changes have been made to the Green Belt boundaries in the Plan to enable development to take place in a measured way in accordance with the NPPF. The policy sets out at paragraph 2.81 (with proposed modifications) that 13 sites are to be removed from the

Green Belt which includes land in the vicinity of Coventry Airport (sub regional employment site) and the University of Warwick.

We object to the draft policy on the basis that the Fen End site, which has been identified as an important investment site in the Updated SELS is not included as a site to be removed from the Green Belt.

The site was not assessed in the Green Belt review and the Council has used the 2006 Local Plan Inspector's report to inform the current designations on the site. It is not considered that draft Policy DS19 is justified and as such the Plan is not considered to be 'sound'.

When taken as a whole, it is not considered that the Fen End site makes a significant positive contribution to the Green Belt. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF sets out the function and purposes of designating land as Green Belt which include;

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

It is considered that this site does not perform any of the stated functions of including land within the Green Belt for the following reasons;

- The site is contained by strong defensible boundaries. There is no potential for urban sprawl;
- The allocation of the site would not cause the merging of neighbouring towns;
- There would be no future encroachment into the existing countryside as the site is contained by the test track, part of which runs along the south east boundary of the site;
- The allocation of the site for employment uses associated with Jaguar Land Rover would not impact on the character of historic towns; and
- The allocation of the site for employment would not have a detrimental impact on urban regeneration as the Council has already clearly identified the site as an important Strategic Employment Site and the need to release suitable sites from the Green Belt.

As set out above, the site benefits from two implemented planning permissions for: advanced engineering research and development campus for the automotive and motorsport industries and associated development (Ref. W/14/1152); and for the erection of a building to accommodate the vehicle operations division of Jaguar Land Rover, and ancillary works including car parking, 'work in progress' storage areas for part-prepared vehicles, amendments to the existing vehicle track circuit, track and infield access, site access, landscaping and other ancillary works (reference W/15/1419) .

As such, the key principle of large scale development on the site has already been established. The site is an important component of the District and sub-regional growth plan as set out in the SELS Update, and the Council's opinion that the openness of the site needs to be maintained should be considered in the longer term context of the benefits of economic development and the future use and growth of the site. The designation of the site within the Green Belt could act as a barrier to economic growth.

An automotive and research related employment site such as Fen End needs to ensure that it can adapt quickly to external forces such as technological advances and changes in market demand. Adequate flexibility needs to be provided which allows for differing uses and activities to come forward over the life of the plan. This will allow Jaguar Land Rover the necessary flexibility to respond to the continually evolving global markets within which it operates.

In summary, Jaguar Land Rover seeks positive planning policies that provide certainty in order to have confidence in its ability to invest, expand and broaden operations in the future as part of long term plans for Fen End, which will be of benefit to the local, county, sub-regional and national economy, and to minimise planning risk. In order to ensure that draft Policy DS19 is 'sound' it is considered that the entire

Fen End site should be removed from the Green Belt to ensure that the site's future use is secured and that future development of employment generating uses are not restricted. This will ensure that the site is 'future proofed' for future economic development, in line with Paragraph 20 of the NPPF which states "to help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century".

### **New Standalone Jaguar Land Rover – Fen End Policy**

In addition to the removal of Fen End from the Green Belt, it is also considered appropriate that a new, standalone policy should be included in the emerging Local Plan to identify, maintain and support Jaguar Land Rover's existing and future operations at Fen End in order to help contribute to the company's continued success in the wider region and the competitive global automotive sector.

While we recognise and welcome that the Fen End site (Former Honiley Airfield site) is identified and allocated under draft policy MS2: Major Sites in the Green Belt, it is considered that this policy alone does not provide a suitable policy basis for the consideration of development on the site. The policy is therefore not 'consistent with national policy'. As drafted this policy in effect repeats the policy of the Framework in respect of the development of previously developed land located in the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 89:

*"A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:*

*...  
limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development."*

A specific policy should be provided for the site which recognises the real economic benefits of the activities to the local, regional and national economy, and the particular nature of the site.

The whole of the former airfield is previously developed land and should be recognised as providing potential employment opportunities across the life of the Plan.

It is considered that the proposed policy wording put forward within the next section reflects the objectives of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, which sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for sustainable economic growth.

The Government expects the planning system to actively encourage growth and support economic activity. This approach was re-emphasised in the Government's Plan for Growth and budget announcement in March 2011, which aimed to ensure that the planning system does everything possible to support economic growth and sustainable development.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for sustainable economic growth, on which local plans are to be based. This is supported by the Council's and LEP's Strategy for Economic Growth.

An automotive and research related employment site needs to ensure that it can adapt quickly to external forces such as technological advances and changes in market demand. In order to create and to create confidence to attract investment to this site there is a need to support its expansion and to broaden its current operations in the future to assist with the longer term development which will be of benefit to the local, sub-regional and national economy, and this will assist in determination of future planning application proposals.

It is critical that the former Honiley Airfield employment site can be expanded in the future in order that it can continue to fulfil its important role as a Strategic District Employment site in order to provide opportunities to create further jobs on site and widen local employment opportunities.

This employment site has the potential to contribute to the aims and objectives of the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP and support sustainable growth and job creation across the area.

**8. Please set out what change(s) you consider necessary to make the Proposed Modifications to the Submission Warwick District Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the test you have identified at Question 5 above where this relates to soundness. You will need to say why this change will make the Local Plan/Sustainability Appraisal legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.**

In light of the above comments, it is considered necessary, in order to plan positively for sustainable development on the site and make the plan 'sound', that draft Policy DS19, and its supporting text at paragraph 2.81 is amended to exclude the Fen End site from the Green Belt along the existing defensible site boundaries. This will ensure that the site is 'future proofed' for future economic development, in line with Paragraph 20 of the NPPF which states "to help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century".

A plan illustrating our suggested revised boundaries is enclosed at Appendix B of this representation.

We support the overall vision and aspirations of the Warwick District Council's emerging Local Plan. However, the suggested change to draft planning policy is required in order delivery sustainable economic growth.

In addition, given the status of the site as previously developed land, with substantial buildings and structures, it does not perform the function of Green Belt land, and accordingly should be removed from the Green Belt as part of the Green Belt review.

We would welcome an on-going engagement in respect of these emerging policy principles and ideas. In this way we can limit uncertainty in respect of any policy change and we can also assist with a practical knowledge of the underlying economic influences which ultimately deliver development and the Nation's growth agenda.

In addition to excluding the Fen End site from the Green Belt, and in light of the above considerations it is considered necessary, in order to plan positively for sustainable development on the Site and make the plan 'sound', that the following policy be included:

***"Former Honiley Airfield***

***The Council support further appropriate development in principle.***

***The very special economic circumstances of the Former Honiley Airfield are recognised and the planning policies in respect of the Site are intended to positively plan for the consolidation and appropriate expansion of existing activities.***

***The Council will support and encourage the development of appropriate uses at the former Honiley Airfield in order to stimulate new economic growth, skills and opportunities and to enhance and maintain the function an automotive and research based site. Any appropriate development and expansion of the former Honiley Airfield for automotive related research and product development will be given positive consideration.***

***The Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.***

***Land at the Former Honiley Airfield will be made available to enable the expansion of Jaguar Land Rover to meet the business needs for uses that can include:***

- ***Research, design, testing and development of motor vehicles and ancillary related activities;***
- ***Other advanced engineering technologies and products;***
- ***Offices;***
- ***Development of associated facilities and infrastructure;***
- ***The provision of appropriate car parking and vehicle storage across the site and within the centre of the track for product vehicles, employees, contractors and visitors;***
- ***The provision of a new roundabout and associated access;***
- ***The provision of security measures around the site.”***