

Submission to CCC Examination

By way of introduction this submission is made on behalf of Fillongley Parish Council (FPC) and Corley Parish Council (CPC). As two rural and predominately Green Belt communities, the Councils often work together on issues that arise from time to time and have significant impact on both our Parishes.

The Parishes border each other and would be equally very badly affected, if development on Green Belt land is given the authority to proceed by Coventry City Council (CCC).

Our observations and submission covers a variety of aspects and collectively demonstrate how totally unacceptable and ill conceived this proposition is.

The land involved has and still is Green belt and used for agricultural purposes. It's very presence in its current state provides a natural break between the conurbation which is Coventry and the historic villages that have existed, largely unchanged, for many years.

FPC and CPC fully acknowledge that there is a need for additional housing in the Coventry area but would point out that within the city there are still many Brownfield sites that would be idea for residential accommodation. The clear advantage to using these sites would result in the housing needs being met and 'run down' parts of the city being revived to the benefit of all. We know that developers given a choice would welcome being offered unused land but in our view this type of attitude needs to be changed - if not the destruction of precious Green Belt land will gather momentum.

Coventry was a historic, walled city that was devastated by the blitz. However, a succession of city councils have largely destroyed the heart of the city with mindless over development of retail outlets in the hope of short term financial gain. The character of the city has been destroyed and now large retails units are unoccupied. Many shops, offices and other buildings have been converted to student accommodation further changing the inner city. Whilst it is welcome that there are two very successful universities in the city, Coventry and Warwick, this type of temporary population is in no way justification for building thousands of houses on Green Belt land.

Coventry was previously the home of many engineering and high skilled mass employment companies – companies like Rolls Royce, Alfred Herbert, Massey Ferguson, Wickmans. Jaguar, Rover etc all that have long gone. These companies employed thousands and supported the local economy. The fantasy that the city council puts forward that high skilled employment is returning to the city on the same scale is just totally untrue.

Typically employment in current times is more linked to either the public, retail or other service related occupations – employment of a type that can either be towards the lower end of the remuneration scales and/or of a temporary nature. The location of the proposed developments are out of the city and it is questionable as to whether current public transport would be adequate thus putting much added pressure on the current road infrastructure.

Even if high tech firms move into the area they will in no way employ anywhere near the numbers previously enjoyed and therefore the question has to be asked – who will buy all these new homes and be in a position to afford to do so!!

From our understanding there is little or no thought to the impact on the roads and other associated infrastructure. Schools and healthcare services are already stretched. We know from experience in other areas promise of funds from developers to be used for social infrastructure are taken by the council then used to 'prop up' other budget issues.

Both Parish Councils are totally opposed to continued urban sprawl with no thought of the impact on neighbouring rural communities. Our roads and lanes are already busy – use includes agricultural type vehicles and significant increase in vehicle movements will not only cause distress but potentially be very dangerous.

A couple of examples of this include – a narrow lane down Corley Rocks which is already used as a cut through to Bedworth and Nuneaton. Cars speed down this lane at dangerous speeds and incidents happen on a regular basis.

The junction of Long Lane with the Tamworth Road; it is already a junction that at many times of day becomes very busy and dangerous – this is very near where development is proposed.

Fillongley and Corley can only continue to exist as vibrant villages if there is some boundary between them and a city which needs to be contained and accept its responsibility to use its considerable influence on developers to regenerate the city, provide appropriate housing and employment without destroying our precious Green Belt.

Both FPC and CPC, and the residents which we represent, feel under considerable pressure. Not only is CCC planning on extending its 'sprawl' but Bedworth and Nuneaton and Birmingham seem to have similar expansion plans.

Rural communities and green space is important not only for those who live in these communities but benefit all who live in the locality. Future generations need the experience of open space and rural environments – something that will be lost if this over development is allowed to proceed.

Once the Green Belt is gone it is gone forever!!

We would respectfully request that the Planning Inspector finds in favour of those opposing aspects of CCC Local Plan and request CCC takes its responsibilities to its citizens and the wider community seriously.