

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 01 February 2024 18:05  
**To:** Local Plan  
**Subject:** Response to the Local Plan

**Categories:** Green Category

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to raise some important issues in the local plan proposals, and with specific focus on the proposed changes to Green Belt boundaries.

The plan aims to revise the allocation and repurposing of existing Green Belt land. I am specifically concerned in how this affects the proposed development at M6 Junction 2 (RBC planning application R23/1027). These plans don't appear to be in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Government has (specifically over recent months) emphasized the priority of maintaining and protecting Green Belt land. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have been urged to utilise brown field sites as a priority in their plans. The NPPF requires that any use of Green Belt land be only considered in "exceptional circumstances." The proposals for R23/1027 don't offer support for such circumstances.

Considering the employment rate in the Rugby area: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) recently (June 2023) stated that Rugby's employment is currently 81.4%, compared to West Midlands' rate of 74.3%. The ONS data also states that the unemployment rate in Rugby at this time is 3% which is much lower than the national average of 3.8%. From this it can be seen that there is no requirement for additional employment land in the region. Consequently the proposal in R23/1027 to repurpose the Green Belt area is counter to the directives given in the NPPF. It should also be noted that there are a number of brown field sites in the region that could easily support the development.

The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to manage developments and to prevent creeping urbanisation of rural areas. The Rugby plan itself notes that "In 2023 Friends of the Earth estimated, based on National Forest Inventory data, that just 4.5% of Rugby Borough is woodland. This places Rugby Borough in the bottom 20% of English local authorities for woodland cover." Developments should be driven by best interest in the borough and quality of life for residents; not purely on immediate gains from business interests. Many developments are often highly detrimental to the environment. Wildlife habitats are always lost; it takes years to begin to offset any damage done to the environment. Green Belt land is essential for long term food security and environmental wellbeing; This should be carefully considered for any proposals.

In the case of Ansty (the site of R23/1027) there is already a spread outwards from Coventry city towards the village. Infrastructure in this area is too weak to support such a development. Warwickshire Traffic have noted the lack of road infrastructure to support traffic-intensive activities in this area.

The plan also notes the need for maintaining biodiversity and to build sustainability and environmental considerations into future developments. The proposals in R23/1027 run counter to

these objectives: Any measures claiming to benefit biodiversity are - by the admissions in the plans - not expected to be measurable until the year 2050, if at all. Neither can the inclusion of a "helipad" be seen as supporting the sustainability of the environment. To accept any of these measures in this development would be to run in total opposition to the stated objectives of the plan.

I trust that your judgement in this case will adhere to the values and principles of supporting sustainability and environmental integrity for the near- and long-term benefit of the region.

Yours faithfully

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