

MATTER 5 - SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES - NEWARK AREA

- 15. *Do the policies include adequate and appropriate safeguards with regard to the potential effects of development on the historic environment, flooding and local services? Has satisfactory provision been made in respect of transport and other infrastructure requirements?***

In respect of the historic environment, and with particular reference to Collingham, the DPD has been informed by the Collingham Conservation Area Appraisal (2006), which identified the revised Conservation Area Boundary and sites which were deemed to be 'important open area contributing to the setting of the village'. The policies proposed that are intended to safeguard against development that would affect the historic environment should be of sufficient strength to protect such areas.

The majority of the land that is being promoted to the west of my Client's land is not only within the Main Open Area (see my comments to question 18 below) but is also within the Conservation Area and the 'important contribution' area as referred to above. In this respect it is clear that the weight of the policy that serves to protect the historic environment should serve to protect all land that is within such areas, especially where they are also deemed to be important open areas that contribute to the setting of the village.

We have no comment to make regarding flooding, local services, transport or other infrastructure requirements.

- 18. *Is the location and size of the Main Open Areas appropriate and is it justified? Would the policies provide sufficient protection from future development in these areas?***

Main Open Areas (MOAs) are defined by the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan 1999 as:-

"predominantly open land within settlements that play an important role in defining their form and structure. They frequently add to the distinctive charm and character of villages and may include paddocks, orchards, meadows, and gardens. While often attractive, landscape quality need not be pre-requisite to designation as an MOA"

The District Council undertook a comprehensive review of its Main Open Areas¹ in early 2011. The review recommended that 32 MOAs be designated or continue to be designated within the various settlements of the district and 18 areas of land which were designated as MOAs or part of MOAs in the Local Plan should no longer have a MOA. The Council has also consulted on the development potential of these sites at Options stage of this DPD and secured local views on the desirability of developing these MOAs, as opposed to more peripheral village locations. We commented at that time, indicating that the MOA within which our site (Co/AS/2) is located, could feasibly be reduced in its overall size in order to share the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. Our site has minimal visual value as part of the MOA as it is surrounded on 3 sides by dwelling and forms an overgrown paddock which is underused by members of the public. The land is private (other than where the public footpath crosses it) and does not function as useable recreational space. Conversely, the land to the western side of this MOA is connected better to the historic core of the village and functions better, visually and physically with the surrounding development. For these reason we argued that the MOA could feasibly be reduced in it overall scale in order that it conformed to the same eastern boundary as the Conservation Area.



¹ Core Document EB23 – Main Open Area Review –July 2011

It is accepted that the LPA have been pro-active in reviewing and updating the MOA designations in advance of this examination of the Site Allocations DPD yet it is argued that more could have been done in order to provide a realistic revision to the main MOA in Collingham in order that some of the poorer land within it could be released for housing development.

That said, a consideration of the appropriate size and extent of MOA's is a likely matter for debate at this examination, and there may be a case for these sites to be reduced in size in locations where the amenity value of the land is perceived to be limited and contributes little in isolation to the character of the village and the setting of key features such as the Conservation Area. In this regard a revision to the MOA containing site Co/AS/2 will release land with a clear potential for development of a modest scale. This scale of development would be entirely appropriate as a modest supplemental site in the village should additional housing be deemed necessary through the Inspectors assessment of overall housing provision and flexibility as programmed to be discussed in Matters 1-3.

The Main Open Area designations have mostly provided sufficient protection from inappropriate development over the 35 years that they have been in force as planning policy designations within Newark & Sherwood District. In the Collingham scenario, where Conservation Area designations also impact on the greater part of the two remaining MOA's in the village, we consider that the current policy framework should be revised in order to protect reduced sites from development, therefore securing adequate protection for the only the most important areas covered by this designation.