**Land South of Bradford Road**

**The need for a strategy**

The argument given by the Case Officer in recommending approval, centres on the ‘Abberd Lane Appeal Decision.’ This concluded that Policy H4 of the North Wiltshire Plan is out of date. The Council should assess housing supply against the Planning Inspectorate assessed need until the Core Strategy is adopted and a locally derived housing requirement is approved.

This means that (until the Core Strategy is adopted) – applications will be decided against national planning policy – mainly that they are sustainable developments.

BUT The Planning Inspectorate Examination of the Core Strategy is about to finish.[[1]](#endnote-1) A fact check report has been promised at the end of October, with the final report to follow. Corsham’s Neighbourhood Plan is also currently under consultation.

**Strategy Adoption**

So final adoption of the Core Strategy is imminent. This application would be rejected under the Core Strategy.

Core Policy 2 states:

“Development outside of the limits of development will only be permitted where it has been identified through community-led planning policy documents including neighbourhood plans, or a subsequent development plan document which identifies specific sites for development.”

Which is not the case for this proposal.

Further, the Council’s own Spatial Planning team have identified that:

* there is no immediate need for additional housing at the town;
* the site will erode the strategic gap between Corsham and Rudloe; and
* the site does not comply with the community area strategy for Corsham which seeks to prioritise development on previously used land before releasing Greenfield sites.

The Council’s SHLAA[[2]](#endnote-2) indicates that they are a number of redundant military sites likely to deliver significant schemes in the near future.

**Sustainable Development**

This application does not represent sustainable development. The Council’s Case Officer recently defined[[3]](#endnote-3) sustainability as meeting the key points of Corsham Community Area’s vision[[4]](#endnote-4).

Including:

* dealing with MoD sites as a priority;
* balancing housing delivery alongside employment;
* that major development sites be well integrated into the existing settlements;
* identifying appropriate solutions to address capacity issues on the A4 and Bradford Road; and
* enhancing the character of the area and conserving the character of the local landscape.

None of which are demonstrated by this application.

**Conclusion**

The provision of housing in Wiltshire should be in accordance with planning strategy developed by the Council, in consultation with the local community, rather than driven by speculative proposals from housing developers.

This application does not represent sustainable development, and should be refused on those grounds.

This application would be refused if the Core Strategy were in place – and applied. No approval should be given until the Core Strategy, and Corsham’s Neighbourhood Plan have been adopted.

1. Letter from Inspector to Council 6/10/14. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Refusal of proposal for Land North of Bath Road [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Para 5.59 WCS [↑](#endnote-ref-4)