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Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

21 September 2021

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Councillor D Welsh

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Response to petition regarding building on areas identified as green belt and urban green space

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**Is this a key decision?**

No.

Although the matters within the report affect all wards in the city, it is not anticipated that the impact will be significant

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**Executive Summary:**

This report provides a formal response to a petition submitted on 28 May 2021 sponsored by Councillor K. Maton, bearing 117 combined signatures.

This report has considered the petition and recommends that the Cabinet Member reiterates the position as set out in the Local Plan.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member is requested to consider the petition and reiterate the position set out in Local Plan Policy GB1.

**List of Appendices included:**

None.

**Background papers:**

None.

**Other useful documents:**

None.

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No.

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No.

**Report title: Petition regarding building on areas identified as green belt and urban green space**

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 This report provides a formal response to a petition submitted on 28 May 2021 and sponsored by Councillor K. Maton, bearing 117 signatures. The petition reads:

We the undersigned petition the Council to reiterate its policy that no housing should be allowed on identified green belt or urban green space areas. Further, that the council increases efforts to ensure that new housing areas contain high levels of quality accessible landscaped space and developers are encouraged to provide such landscaped areas and gardens as part of their housing developments

- 1.2 The petition provides a justification as follows:

The council has both a policy of “brownfield first” and a policy of the protection of green belt and urban green spaces. In the recent planning application by the council for Elm Fields Farm it includes houses on land that was identifies as urban green space in the Coventry Local Plan and the previously approved planning application. We are alarmed that the council could be setting a dangerous precedent for future planning applications by this application.

- 1.3 It is taken that the urban green space referenced in the petition and the land designation Local Green Space are synonymous. The Council’s position on development in green belt and Local Green Space are expressed in Policy GB1 of the Local Plan, specifically;

2A: Inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Coventry Green Belt unless very special circumstances exist. Development proposals, including those involving previously developed land and buildings, in the Green Belt will be assessed in relation to the relevant national planning policy.

and

2B: Within areas designated as Local Green Space, the erection of small buildings and structures which are ancillary to the primary use of the land may be acceptable. Other development will not be permitted unless very special circumstances are demonstrated.

- 1.4 The Council remains committed to the above policy, which also conforms with national policy.
- 1.5 The Council also remains committed to delivering high quality residential environments through the use of Plan policies and constructive negotiation with developers. To further aid this the Council will soon be publicly consulting on a Green Space Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will further articulate developer requirement and help deliver on-site provision of a variety of open space typologies.
- 1.6 It would not be appropriate to comment on specific planning applications, however, it should be noted that green belt and Local Green Space are specific land designations. These are easily viewed via the interactive Policies map on the City Council website, and compared with planning applications.

1.7 Finally, it is important to note that each planning application must be determined on its own individual merits. Therefore, any decision on a specific application should not be considered to be a precedent.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

2.1 The Cabinet Member could choose to agree with the petition in its entirety. However, there is a difference between the position set out in the petition and that set out in the Local Plan (and in the National Planning Policy Framework). This option is not recommended as it would be inappropriate to try to vary the Local Plan via any other process than that set out in statute and would be unenforceable.

2.2 The Cabinet Member is recommended to reiterate the position set out in Local Plan Policy GB1. This Policy makes clear that inappropriate development in both green belt and Local Green Space areas will be resisted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

## **3 Results of consultation undertaken**

3.1 No consultation has been undertaken as part of this report.

## **4 Timetable for implementing this decision**

4.1 There is no timetable for implementing this decision as no actions are recommended beyond noting the report.

## **5 Comments from the Director of Finance and the Director of Law and Governance**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **6 Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

This report itself does not respond to any of the council key priorities or objectives within the One Coventry Corporate Plan.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

There are no risks associated with this report

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

No direct impact.

#### 6.4 Equalities / EIA

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (ECA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

#### 6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

There are no implications identified.

#### 6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

There are no implications identified.

#### Report author:

##### Name and job title:

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#### Service

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