

From: Sian Griffiths
Subject: Matter 4 - Lea Castle Point of Clarification from Barberry
Date: 2 February 2021 at 10:51:31 GMT
To: Louise St John Howe <louise@poservices.co.uk>

Good morning Louise,

Hope your week is going well so far.

Our landscape consultant, Ali Osbourne-Brown (for Barberry) has requested that the following be sent to the Inspector, as she has had some concerns over what was discussed under Matter 4. If this is possible, we would be grateful:

'We are acutely aware that there has been quite a gap between the end of Matter 4 and the reference the council gave at the very end of the session that the cumulative effects on the Green Belt for Lea Castle had been done in the Stage 1 Green Belt Report. Having slept on this we realised that this was not accurate and reviewed their evidence again.

In the Stage 1 Strategic GB Review, the Inspector will see that this is only an assessment of the contribution the Lea Castle (NE2) site makes to the Green Belt. It is not an assessment of the development proposals (and their cumulative effects) which was one of the stated and defined 3 key objectives for the Stage 2 GB report - to inform site selection decision making.

The Councils previous, scrambled reasoning that this was done in the Sustainability Assessment in 2019, 1 year later, does not hold for two reasons. One, it merely states a high impact, and does not state what the cumulative effects on the 5 purposes on the GB are, and; two, this assessment of cumulative effects of the development proposals (which were known at this time) should have been done in the Stage 2 Green Belt Report, informing decision making on site selection, and it was not.

The table referencing NE2's contribution to the 5 purposes of the Green Belt is in Appendix B3 pages 128-130 of the Stage 1

Report. It may be useful for the Inspector to note that under ‘The role of preventing neighbouring Towns from merging’ it erroneously states that NE2 makes a ‘limited contribution’ as it is not between towns but then goes onto to say, ‘although locally this part of land separates Cookley and Kidderminster’. The reason it is given a limited contribution grade is only because Cookley is a village not a town. So we would suggest that Ms Stones assertion that Lea Castle does not cause the coalescence of Kidderminster with Cookley is both inaccurate and an unsound planning judgement.’

Best wishes,

Sian

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