

# Council

5th September 2011

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## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Anita Clayton (Mayor), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Michael Braley, Rebecca Blake, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Simon Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Malcolm Hall, Bill Hartnett, Roger Hill, Robin King, Wanda King, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, William Norton, Jinny Pearce, Mark Shurmer, Luke Stephens, Debbie Taylor and Derek Taylor

### Also Present:

M Collins (Vice-Chairman, Standards Committee)

### Officers:

J Bayley, K Dicks, C Felton, C Flanagan, S Hanley, J Pickering, S Skinner and A Walsh

### Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

**The following extract from the minutes of the 5th September Council meeting contains the relevant minute relating to the deputation who attended the meeting to present a petition on the following subject: Save Brockhill Green Belt.**

### MINUTE 49

#### DEPUTATION - SAVE BROCKHILL GREEN BELT

A petition had been received, in accordance with current Constitutional arrangements and the Petition Scheme, which contained in excess of the 400 signatures required to trigger a Council debate. In addition, the petitioners had asked that the Council receive a deputation on this matter.

Prior to receipt of the deputation, the Council's Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services clarified for the benefit of Members and the petitioners / deputation the extent of the involvement which the Council might properly have in this matter at

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Chair

this particular stage. Advice was given that planning applications were only to be determined by the Planning Committee but that planning policy was a matter for Council approval in due course. However, the petition focussed upon matters being considered and consulted upon within the ongoing Core Strategy development process.

The members of the deputation, Mr Mark Whitworth and Mr Richard Lee, supported by Mr David Moss, addressed the Council on the subject of the two areas of land in Brockhill, those covered by Policy 29 in the draft Core Strategy (Brockhill East) and Policy 30 (Brockhill West).

Mr Whitworth reminded Members of the outcomes of earlier reviews of land available for development within the Borough. It had previously been acknowledged that areas of green belt should not be considered as potential sites for future development. Members were informed that the deputation and petition were not in objection to the future development of the ADR land in Brockhill.

Mr Lee argued that the Brockhill East area should be removed from the developing Core Strategy as land suitable for development. It was noted that the Planning Inspectorate had previously stated that the current green belt would be readily defensible and that exceptional circumstances did not prevail that should cause this designation to be removed. The high ecological and environmental interest and sensitivity of the site was noted as was the quality of the farmland, the potential visual impact of any development and the high amenity value of the area.

Mr Whitworth noted that Brockhill West was not referred to as green belt in the current Core Strategy consultation despite it being previously designated as the Foxlydiate Green Belt. The small size of this site made it relatively insignificant in terms of meeting Redditch's future housing needs but there was the obvious potential for it to be used as an enabler for substantial development across the boundary in Bromsgrove. The inclusion of the site within the Master Plan and its designation as a Strategic Site was considered a substantial change in the space of a few months. It was argued that development of the green belt should be a last resort and not a first option.

Members noted the comments of the Deputation and the content of the petition and, in accordance with the advice of Officers

**RESOLVED that**

**the petition stand referred to the ongoing Core Strategy development process which was to be reported for formal decision by the Council at a later date.**