



**STRATEGIC APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE
9 FEBRUARY 2023**

ADDENDUM

2. OUT/22/01821 - LAND EAST OF RIGBY DRIVE, GREASBY, WIRRAL

ADDITIONAL COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

Councillor Cllr Tracy Elzeiny (Ward Councillor) submitted the following comments:

“As a ward councillor for Greasby, Frankby and Irby, I would like to make known my strong objections to the above application for the following reasons:-

- 1. New housing within greenbelt is deemed as inappropriate development, unless there are exceptional circumstances for doing so. The applicant has not demonstrated any special or exceptional circumstances for this proposal, and the proposal should therefore, be refused.*
- 2. The application conflicts with the Councils regulation 19 submission draft local plan spatial strategy which excludes any release or development of greenbelt land, therefore, the application should be refused.*
- 3. The application conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework not to release any greenbelt land for development, until brownfield and previously developed land opportunities are exhausted. Wirral has a demonstrable excess of suitable brownfield sites, and therefore, the application should be refused.*
- 4. The application conflicts with four of the five purposes of greenbelt ie to check urban sprawl, prevent merging communities, stop countryside encroachment, and assist urban regeneration, and with special reasons why Wirrals greenbelt boundaries remain tightly drawn around existing urban areas, therefore, the application should be refused.*
- 5. The application conflicts with the requirement both the permanence of the greenbelt boundaries once drawn, and the openness of it, therefore the application should be refused.*
- 6. The application conflicts with both national and Wirral policies regarding mitigation of climate change. There is no way that the harm done to ecology, air quality, watercourses and countryside by developing farmland for new housing can be fully mitigated, and therefore the application should be refused.*
- 7. The application conflicts with national and Wirral policies regarding the protection and improvement of productive farmland, in order to ensure future food security, and therefore the application should be refused.*

8. *There is wholly inadequate infrastructure in the area of the proposed development. The local schools are already hugely oversubscribed, and there are already intolerable pressures on the already overstretched available GP practice, dental and hospital services, which would not be able to cope. This proposal would have a wholly detrimental effect on local services and infrastructure, and the proposal should therefore be refused.*
9. *Arrowe Road, Arrowe Brook Road and Arrowe Brook Lane and the surrounding feeder roads are not major roads, which already struggle with large volumes of traffic, too and from Greasby Village. The increase of traffic which will be caused by full occupancy of homes already under construction at the Bellway site is already a cause for concern, and further unneeded development will compound what is already a dangerous situation., therefore the proposal should be refused.*
10. *There is no need for new development in this area, therefore the proposal should be refused.*
11. *This site is one of great archaeological significance, which has, as yet only been partially excavated. Findings on excavation already carried out has shown remains of important Roman and Mesolithic significance which must be protected, and therefore this application should be refused.*
12. *Limited Population growth evidenced in the recent national census clearly shows that new development is not required, and therefore the proposal should be refused.*
13. *This proposal will cause loss of local character of the area and loss of the distinctiveness of villages, contributing to urban sprawl and detrimental effect on amenity. This proposal should therefore be refused.*
14. *There is a significant risk of flooding and the proposal should therefore be refused.”*

ADDITIONAL PETITIONS RECEIVED

Petition 1 – Greasby Green Belt Action Group (2,922 Signatories)

“We the undersigned, urge no development or building on any more of Greasby ward’s green belt, Farms, Fields and open spaces. Furthermore, we urge Wirral Council to refuse planning permission for building houses on ALL Green Belt sites and to return the Borough’s 6000 empty properties into use.”

Petition 2 - Petition to say No to releasing Wirral’s Green Belt for Development – Brownfield First! - Natural Wirral (1,830 Signatories)

“We, the undersigned, urge Wirral Council to challenge the Governments un-realistic and flawed Housing Targets. Wirral Council must use all their available powers and resources to compel Developers to build homes on Brownfield sites first! Furthermore, we urge Wirral Council to refuse planning permission for building houses on ALL Green Belt sites until ALL Brownfield sites have been exhausted and the Boroughs 6000 empty properties have been returned to use.”

Petition 3 - Petition to say No to releasing Wirral's Green Belt for Development – Brownfield First! Natural Wirral (2,897 Signatories)

“We, the undersigned, urge Wirral Council to challenge the Governments un-realistic and flawed Housing Targets. Wirral Council must use all their available powers and resources to compel Developers to build homes on Brownfield sites first! Furthermore, we urge Wirral Council to refuse planning permission for building houses on ALL Green Belt sites until ALL Brownfield sites have been exhausted and the Boroughs 6000 empty properties have been returned to use.”

An updated Petition from one of the Lead Petitioners has been submitted with an extra 1479 signatures

ADDITIONAL NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

These object to the proposal and raise similar issues to those previously raised and reported in the Officers Report:

Additional submissions by the applicant

Additional submissions have been provided by the applicant in order to overcome some of the issues. These are displayed on the digital application file and relate to; Highways, Archaeological, Ecological and Surface Water Drainage matters.

Comments have been sought from relevant consultees Wirral Highways and Transport Team, Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS).

An additional response has been received from United Utilities (UU), which is summarised below.

Highways and Transport Matters

The submitted information from a Highways and Transport perspective does not change the recommendation in terms of Highways and Transport Matters. No further comment has been received from the Wirral Highways and Transport Team.

Ecological and Matters relating to the Matters

Lack of information from an ecological perspective is a recommended reason for refusal of this application, MEAS have commented the following in relation to the environmental statement.

“Point 5, I advise that the Environmental Statement is acceptable subject to any additional information being required by the relevant technical specialists.

Point 9, I will defer to the relevant technical specialists on the acceptability of the proposed baseline years.

Point 10, I acknowledge that the proposed developments are intended to be built with new dwellings to a high standard which will reduce carbon emissions in this regard, and this is welcomed.

The applicant has revised Chapter 12 Agricultural Land Quality. I advise that the Agricultural Land Assessment in terms of consideration of carbon storage properties is acceptable. The mitigation measures outlined within the Chapter should be implemented and these can be secured by a suitably worded condition(s)

Whilst this resolves these points in relation to the Environmental Statement, it is not considered that the submitted additional information would likely make the proposal acceptable with regards to recommended ecological reason for refusal of the application

Archaeological Matters

Lack of information from an archaeological perspective is also a recommended reason for refusal of this application. MEAS have commented that

I advise that no attempt has been made to contact MEAS for an archaeological scope of work either by the agents or an archaeological contractor.

Should the council be minded to grant planning permission without the predetermination archaeological works having taken place, then the applicant must face the risk to the development programme of nationally significant archaeological remains being encountered during pre-commencement archaeological works. The MEAS response memo dated (02/12/2022) provides clear evidence for nationally important archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development site.

It is not considered that the submitted additional information would likely make the proposal acceptable with regards to the recommended archaeological reason for refusal.

Surface Water Drainage and Flood Risk Matters

The impact of the proposal on flood risk and the surface water drainage network, by virtue of not meeting the minimum standards for sustainable drainage, is a recommended reason for refusal of this application.

No further comment has been received from the LLFA as to whether this concern has been overcome via the submission of the additional information., In addition to this, whilst not objecting to the proposal, a comment has been received from United Utilities in relation to this scheme requesting further information on ground levels and a sustainable drainage strategy and suggesting conditions.

It is not considered that the submitted additional information would likely make the proposal acceptable with regards to flood risk and surface water drainage matters.