

Saltford Green Belt Inquiry into the appeal by Crest Nicholson (South West Ltd) following the non-determination of their application for planning permission for a residential development of up to a maximum of 99 units, access and associated works at Manor Road, Saltford BS31 3AB. August 2013.

The “Case to the Inquiry” (from SEG & SGBC)

The case is made by Saltford Environment Group - an independent group of over 280 members seeking a more sustainable future for the village of Saltford - and Saltford Green Belt Campaign. It is based on literally hundreds of discussions with individual residents of our community during the petition and with SEG’s membership.

This case is made as a representation of the following:

- The views and opinions expressed by nearly 1,000 local residents who signed the campaign’s petition. That petition was specifically against this development and against building on Green Belt land in Saltford.
- The 156 residents who voted against the development at the public meeting held on 5th January 2013.
- The 93% of households that responded to the Saltford Parish Plan questionnaire in 2009. They want Saltford’s Green Belt protected, not built upon. It is relevant that they gave that view before they were aware of this planning application that has arrived some 3 years later.

We are strongly opposed to this proposed development for numerous reasons that have been submitted to BaNES in over 400 objections from 500 individuals and organisations. It is outside Saltford’s housing development boundary so cannot be classed as infilling and therefore falls outside the permitted exceptions for Green Belt development in NPPF paragraph 89. There are two key reasons why we are against this proposed development on our Green Belt.

Firstly, it is not sustainable development.

The Sustainability Appraisal commissioned by Saltford Environment Group that we have submitted as key evidence to the Inquiry is unequivocal in supporting this assessment. Furthermore, the Sustainability Appraisal includes recent Ministerial correspondence that shows that the Government does not intend for Green Belt and agricultural land such as this to be developed.

Secondly, there is a strong feeling locally that Saltford will be treated unjustly if this appeal is won and the planning application is permitted to proceed.

Bath and North East Somerset Council, rather than a housing developer, is democratically elected by the local community to plan and determine where new housing developments should be located through its Core Strategy and place-making consultation process. We feel strongly that if allowed to proceed, this development would not only extend the existing housing development boundary against the wishes of local residents, but set a dangerous precedent for other developments on our Green Belt.

This is inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would affect its openness and permanence at this location. It would degrade the rural village setting of Saltford, and would be contrary to the Green Belt purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

Phil Harding, 14 August 2013

Copyright Phil Harding 2013