

SOUTH LAKELAND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

OBJECTIONS TO LAND ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT ON SITE RN133M (PART OF SITE R120)

As residents of Blencathra Gardens and Hard Knott Gardens we strongly oppose the identification of this site for future housing. The triangle of land between Burton Road and Oxenholme Road has been the subject of three previous public inquiries, in 1988, 1996 and 2003. On all three occasions development of the critical Green Gap between Kendal and Oxenholme has been rejected. In both 1988 and 1996 Inspectors concluded that permission for any foothold development on this site would pave the way for complete development of the Gap. In 2003 over 1000 public objections were received to the proposed allocation of an employment site on the Triangle.

We are now appalled that flying in the face of its own strategies on coalescence and sustainability, South Lakeland is proposing a significant housing development (an estate, eventually amounting to 182 dwellings) on the raised fields behind Blencathra Gardens and Hard Knott Gardens. We also note with alarm that other parts of the Triangle are allocated to a business/science park (site M2M) and as outdoor sports facilities on site ON1 (no doubt with associated car parks, changing rooms and clubhouse). The net impact of these developments will be to destroy the integrity of the Green Gap and to achieve the historic amalgamation of Kendal and Oxenholme along Oxenholme Road.

We are further concerned that in the Land Allocations Document no mention is made of the sensitivity of this site, the three previous public enquiries and decades of campaigning by local people to protect the Green Gap. The site is not even deemed worthy of a separate development brief as are all other proposed sites in Kendal of similar size. We also note that the proposed site RN133M is approximately twice the size of the site RN133 on

which the preliminary consultation took place in 2009 and which some of us opposed.

We have to conclude that South Lakeland DC is determined to proceed with development of this site against the wishes of residents and against its own sustainability and coalescence policies (see detailed comments below). We will however use all possible democratic means to oppose these flawed and unsound proposals at every stage in the process.

Green Gaps/Coalescence

The Land Allocations Document states that sites are excluded from consideration if “the development would compromise an identified Green Gap.” Green Gaps themselves are defined inter alia as:

- **If developed would cause or add to the risk of future coalescence of two or more settlements**
- **Is predominantly open and maintains an open aspect**
- **Affords recreational and biodiversity opportunities**

The Document itself also states that key local factors influencing the location of new development include:

- **Avoiding coalescence between Kendal and Oxenholme and maintaining the separate identities of these settlements**
- **Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the surrounding landscape....when viewed from important viewpoints such as the Helm**

How then has South Lakeland convinced itself that 182 new properties (and the other developments) on the Green Gap meet its own strategies? The answer lies in what seems to be a deliberate manipulation of their detailed sustainability appraisal of site RN133M. This appraisal, apparently undertaken “with maps, aerial photos and local knowledge” states that the development of site RN133M:

- Has no potential to contribute to coalescence of settlements currently or in the foreseeable future
 - Has a neutral effect on landscape character
-

Both these conclusions are completely opposite to the sustainability assessment of the rest of the Triangle and can only be regarded as a means to a desired end rather than an impartial professional analysis.

Sustainability Other Issues

The Land Allocations Document states that of particular importance in considering new development in Kendal is to “safeguard and enhance the River Kent Special Area of Conservation, an internationally important habitat, particularly for the seriously threatened White Clawed Crayfish”. A tributary of the Kent flows through the middle of this development site and is therefore subject to these concerns. The Council’s sustainability appraisal also admits that the potential for the great crested newt and other key species exists on the proposed site but then illogically concludes that the biodiversity impact of 182 houses built across the stream is “neutral”! Local residents also point out that this area is an important habitat for lapwings (one of the few around Kendal), herons and bats.

There are many other issues of concern around this proposed development including lack of primary school places, risk of flooding, loss of air quality, increased traffic congestion and a serious detraction to the views of Kendal from the Helm and other viewpoints, some of which are acknowledged in the documents.

It is our contention, however, that the flaws in following the Council’s own coalescence and sustainability policies should in themselves result in site RN133M being withdrawn immediately from the Land Allocations Document.

We, the undersigned local residents support the above comments and wish them to be submitted to South Lakeland District Council on our behalf:

Names:

Address

<p>Mr. R. [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]</p> <p>Mr. R. [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]</p>	<p>4 [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]</p> <p>[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]</p>
---	---

Additional Comments (if any)

Date: