



# Shaw Residents' Association

Serving the Residents of Peatmoor, Sparcells, Nine Elms, Middleleaze, Shaw and Ramleaze

15 July 2011

## Shaw Residents Association position with respect to the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the planning application for the site known as Ridgeway Farm

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Dear Mr Andrew Kerr – WCC Chief Executive

The Shaw Residents Association (SRA) of West Swindon is pleased to note that the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has been abandoned by central government. The Core Strategy that has replaced it promises to give more accountability to locally elected representatives and an improved model for local residents to have an input into any development proposals. This is good for local democracy.

The SRA is particularly pleased with the comments on page 73 of appendix 3 (annex 3) of the Core Strategy. This page states that the area known as the “West of Swindon” will not be subject to any further development within the Core Strategy over and above the 200 homes already being built at Moredon Bridge.

We note that you reference the application for development of Ridgeway Farm and state that should this application be approved this will be over and above the housing numbers assigned in the WCC Core Strategy. On this subject, the SRA would like to note that of the more than 1000 responses sent in relation to this application, 100% of them are against the development.

There are a number of additional references in the Core Strategy that are considered positive by the SRA and serve as additional reasons to ensure the planning application for Ridgeway Farm is rejected. Below are some examples of Core Strategy quotes with SRA commentary:

- “Strategic objective 1: to deliver a thriving economy which provides a range of job opportunities”:
  - Development of Ridgeway Farm would not provide any long term job opportunities for the people of Swindon. Indeed, your Core Strategy rightly proposes bolstering job opportunities in WCC towns such as Wootton Bassett. Any development of Ridgeway Farm cannot support this objective.
- “Strategic objective 4: - to build resilient communities”:
  - Locating a WCC development onto at the very edge of Swindon Borough Council (SBC) land will mean revenues from this development go to WCC whereas many of the costs in supporting this community will effectively be borne by SBC. As such any investments in integrating such a community into the wider Swindon community will take a low priority given the revenue / cost profile. This does not help build “resilient communities”.
- “Strategic objective 9: to ensure that infrastructure is in place to support our communities”:



West Swindon based Shaw Residents' Association (SRA) provides a forum for the residents of Peatmoor, Sparcells, Nine Elms, Middleleaze, Shaw and Ramleaze to work with statutory authorities, voluntary organizations, businesses etc to protect and improve the environment and facilities for residents.

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- Any development of Ridgeway Farm will have a catastrophic impact on local infrastructure, especially road links. Mead Way is already congested and is the only possible access point for this proposed development.
- “Strategic objective 10: to minimise the risk of flooding”:
  - Much of the Ridgeway Farm proposal lies on or near a flood plain.
- “The strategic location of Wootton Bassett and low number of jobs compared to the population provides an opportunity to expand the employment base significantly. Therefore Wootton Bassett will be the location of strategic employment growth to help reduce out commuting”:
  - Any development of Ridgeway Farm has the potential for 100% of the residents commuting out of WCC into Swindon. This seems contrary to the intent within the Core Strategy.
- “The community area may be seen as being at risk from unchecked expansion of the nearby higher order centre of Swindon. Imposition of a rural buffer as a line on a map is not permitted in a Core Strategy by Government guidance. However, protecting the open countryside, as well as the uniqueness of individual settlements, both of which the Core Strategy recognises are prized objectives by the local community, are therefore an important objective for this strategy and will be taken forward by appropriate and strong policy mechanisms”:
  - Any development of Ridgeway Farm clearly flies in the face of this statement.
- “The separate identities of towns and villages within the community area need to be safeguarded to prevent their coalescence with Swindon”:
  - Development of Ridgeway Farm will ultimately lead to the coalescence of Swindon with Purton.
- “Housing growth in the main settlements will help improve their vitality and create a critical mass to deliver improvements in infrastructure. However, given that there are a number of existing outstanding housing commitments; future housing growth in Wootton Bassett should be phased to enable infrastructure delivery alongside housing growth”:
  - The SRA is very supportive of such statements and trust that such a view will be applied to the Ridgeway Farm application.

In summary, the SRA welcomes the Wilshire Core Strategy as it pertains to the community areas of “Wootton Bassett and Cricklade” and the area known as “West of Swindon”. Based on the reasons documented above and supported by your Core Strategy, the SRA is very much against any development in “West of Swindon” outside of the proposals outlined in the Core Strategy.

Yours Sincerely

Andrew Snowden – SRA Chair



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