

Dear Mr Gilbert (for the attention of the Planning Inspector)

Council Webpage "Timeline of Examination Events"

Site MU1 Agricultural Land Grading

Keep It Green 2014 has noted the contents of the letter dated 05/01/18 submitted by Spawforths in response to the question about "*agricultural land quality across site MU1*" requested by the Planning Inspector in her letter dated 20/12/17.

The letter submitted by Spawforths indicates that the land in question is classified within Grade 3 'Good to Moderate'.

However the letter goes on to say that the land is classified as Grade 3b "*because land comprises heavy clay soil restored following previous open cast mining of the site*".

The inference being that because it is not Grade 3a "*best and most versatile agricultural land*" and it has been previously subject to open cast mining, that the land is of poor quality and lends itself to redevelopment.

In order to provide a balanced view, it should be remembered that Grade 3b is defined as follows:-

"moderate quality agricultural land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year."

The land in question has been consistently managed on this basis.

The Planning Inspector is asked to note that the following webpage link indicates that the majority of agricultural land classification in the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough is shown as "*Good to Moderate*":-

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/130043>

Site MU1 should be seen as no different in this respect therefore.

Keep It Green 2014 representations have previously expressed concerns on the proposed loss of the managed productive farmland within the Green Belt which constitutes Site MU1.

These and many other concerns of Keep It Green 2014 remain.

There are many domestic and international pressures and risks which affect the UK's food supply which have been well documented and presented to the government by their expert advisors.

In particular a report from Cambridge University in 2014 identified such issues, including a potential shortfall of 2 million hectares of agricultural land by 2030.

<https://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/publications/natural-resource-security-publications/best-use-uk-agricultural-land>

Andrew Montague-Fuller, the author of the report has been quoted as saying:-

"Business, government, farmers, and landowners need to work together to ensure we can meet these growing demands, while also protecting the environment"

The UK relies on imports, both to feed its population and to produce its own food.

There are calls for the UK to become more self-sufficient in food production.

The House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee has previously warned that whilst the UK needed a diversity of supply, consumers could be vulnerable to factors outside the Government's control if the trend continued.

The 2016 food, feed and drink deficit for the UK was £22.2 billion.

Regards

Keep It Green 2014

19/01/18