



Decision by David Buylla, a Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers

- Planning appeal reference: PPA-320-2151
- Site address: site to the south of Dorlin Road, Cardowan, Steps
- Appeal by Miller Homes Ltd against the failure of North Lanarkshire Council to determine, within the statutory period, an application for planning permission in principle, reference: 20/01211/PPP, dated 8 October 2020
- The development proposed: residential development and associated infrastructure and landscaping
- Date of site visit by Reporter: 5 August 2021

Date of appeal decision: 13 October 2021

Decision

I dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission in principle.

Preliminary

On 19 November 2019, the planning authority issued a screening opinion confirming that the proposal was not EIA development. Having regard to the nature, scale and location of the proposal, I concur with that conclusion.

Reasoning

1. I am required to determine this appeal in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan comprises the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2017 (Clydeplan) and the North Lanarkshire Local Plan 2012 (the local plan). A replacement for the local plan – the North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan (the proposed LDP) is due to be adopted shortly.
2. The appeal site is located within the green belt. It covers approximately 13.7 hectares of grassland with scattered trees and shrubs. It does not appear to be in use, other than for informal recreation – evidenced by the network of paths that cross it and by the significant number of representations in objection to this proposal that refer to the importance of the land for that purpose. To the north, east and west is an established residential area and to the south are open fields and scrub, part of which is identified as the Cardowan Moss / Garthamloch Quarry Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC).
3. It is proposed to develop the site for up to 300 homes. At this stage, permission is sought in principle, so only limited design and layout details have been provided.



4. Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, the main issues in this appeal are: first, whether the principle of development can be accepted, either because the development plan is out of date or because there is a shortfall in the effective five year housing land supply; and second, the implications of allowing this appeal for the proposed LDP.

The principle of development

5. The local plan confirms the need for a strong green belt policy in order to direct development to major urban areas. Local Plan policy NBE3 restricts development in the green belt to a limited range of use types. This does not include housing. There is no dispute between the main parties that the principle of developing a green belt site for housing is not normally acceptable and is contrary to the development plan. I agree with that assessment.

6. I also agree with the council that the proposal is contrary to Clydeplan's spatial strategy because it would divert development activity away from sustainable locations that have been identified in that plan as Community Growth Areas. This is a further reason why this proposal should only be considered for housing development if justified by exception.

7. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) sets out a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development. The Court of Session in *Gladman Developments Limited v The Scottish Ministers* [2020] CSIH 28 (Gladman [2020]) drew a distinction between development that would contribute to sustainable development and that which would be sustainable development – it not being necessary for a proposal to demonstrate the latter in order to enjoy the benefits of the SPP presumption.

8. Where a proposal does not accord with an up to date development plan, SPP confirms that the primacy of the development plan is maintained and the presumption is a material consideration. However, where policies are out of date, where the plan contains no relevant policies, where a development plan is more than five years old, or where a shortfall in the five year effective housing supply arises, the presumption must be given significant weight and, in order to justify refusing permission, any disbenefits of the proposal must not only outweigh but must significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits. This “tilted balance” could potentially provide the justification this proposal requires to be acceptable in principle.

9. The Court of Session in Gladman [2020] found that an assessment of whether a proposal would contribute to sustainable development was not a precursor to the application of the tilted balance.

10. The 2012 local plan remains part of the development plan until it is replaced by the proposed LDP. Therefore, the appeal site remains within the green belt. However, as the local plan is more than five years old, it is out of date in SPP terms. This means policy NBE3, which rules out the principle of housing development of green belt land, can no longer be considered determinative. Instead, the benefits and disbenefits of the proposal require to be assessed in the planning balance, with that balance being tilted in favour of approval due to age of the local plan.

11. Although this proposal does not need to rely upon a shortfall in the effective five year housing land supply for the planning balance to be tilted in its favour, it is necessary to examine the evidence for any shortfall in order to determine how far in favour of approval, the balance is tilted.

12. The council believes that there is no shortfall in the effective five year housing land supply and refers me to an appeal decision (PPA-320-2144) at Potassells Road, Muirhead, where that conclusion was accepted. It also points out that the recent examination of the proposed LDP found no housing supply shortfall.

13. The council advises that, through successive plans, it has promoted the Community Growth Area at Glenboig and Gartcosh as the appropriate location for planned growth in the northern corridor of North Lanarkshire. In addition, there are two specific housing sites in Steps already identified in the proposed LDP, which is close to adoption. Permitting the development of this greenfield, green belt site would divert developer attention away from these sites, some of which (unlike the appeal site) are in need of regeneration.

14. An assessment of the adequacy of the effective five year supply requires the target to be defined and the level of the supply to be estimated.

15. The Court of Session has found that, when establishing the target number of homes for the next five years, it is the development plan's housing land requirement (rather than its lower, housing supply target) that should be employed. It has also found that, while precise calculations of the shortfall are unlikely to be possible, it is necessary, in order to consider how far the planning balance should be tilted in a proposal's favour, to make a broad assessment of the seriousness of any shortfall.

16. There is debate over whether what is often referred to as the 'residual' method or the 'average' method should be used to calculate the five year target. There are advantages and disadvantages to each.

17. For the average method, the principal disadvantage appears to be the risk that the plan's overall housing land requirement will never be met, due to under-delivery in the past not being addressed. That would fail to meet SPP's clear expectation that the plan's overall housing land requirement is met over the plan period.

18. A disadvantage of the residual method is that it effectively assumes that past delivery shortfalls can be blamed on site-specific factors, rather than a wider picture of reduced demand in the housing market, and that allocating additional effective housing sites will remedy this. I believe that such assumptions are not always justifiable. In a period of on-going reduced demand, it is possible that allocating more sites to address an historical under-supply may not actually assist in delivering the plan's housing land requirement. And, if low market demand proved to be the reason for past under-supply, an improvement in that situation could lead to additional housing sites that were approved on the basis of the residual approach, competing with those that were allocated in the development plan. This has the potential to undermine the plan's spatial strategy, particularly if the additional sites are situated in the green belt or in other locations where the plan does not favour such development.

19. The council has not provided housing land supply calculations specifically for this case, but has referred me to the Potassells Road decision (for which the reporter set out an analysis of this issue in her 27 October 2020 notice of intention). Therefore, I have assumed that the council's position on the five year effective supply remains essentially as it argued in the Potassells Road case.

20. In that case, using the 2018 housing land audit (HLA), the council found an effective private sector housing supply in the Cumbernauld housing sub-market area (where the appeal site is located) of 9.9 years. This is a surplus of 1026 homes. For North Lanarkshire as a whole, an eight year supply of all-tenure housing was identified (a surplus of 3425 units) and a 7.4 year supply of private housing (a surplus of 2044 units). Its approach used the development plan's housing supply target (later found to be inappropriate by the Court of Session in Gladman [2020]) and employed the 'average' method for calculating the five year target against which to assess the effective supply.

21. The Potassells Road appellant used the housing land requirement and residual method but still (using the 2018 HLA) found a similar private sector housing supply surplus to the council (1020 units) for the Cumbernauld housing sub-market area. For North Lanarkshire as a whole, it found a 5.9 year supply of all-tenure housing (a surplus of 1420 units) and a 5.2 year supply of private housing (a surplus of 301 units).

22. The appellant in the current appeal has also used the housing land requirement and residual method to assess the adequacy of the effective five year supply (albeit updated to take account of the 2019 HLA). In the statement that accompanied its planning application, it accepted that there appears to be a surplus of 984 units in the supply of private units in the Cumbernauld housing sub-market area (where the site is located). However, when looked at across the entire North Lanarkshire area, it identified a shortfall in the all-tenure supply of 1742 units, of which 1141 are private tenure. All of these estimates exclude from the effective supply, sites that Homes for Scotland (HfS) disputed in the HLA for the period 2019 to 2024. The statement also notes that the council's intention to demolish approximately 1700 homes was not taken into account by Clydeplan, and argues that the need to provide replacements for the demolished homes would effectively increase the requirement going forward.

23. In its appeal statement, the appellant presents its arguments in a slightly different way, but its conclusions are the same. It identifies the all-tenure North Lanarkshire effective five year supply at 9100 units against a requirement of 7680. This is a surplus of 1420 units. However, it describes this as a "gross" supply. Subtracting from that gross supply, sites that the council has identified in the 2019 HLA as effective which are disputed by HfS (1376 units) and estimated demolitions that have occurred or are predicted to occur by 2024 (2191 units) gives a five year "net" effective supply of only 5533 units. This is a shortfall of 2147 units.

24. It appears that there is no disagreement that, within the Cumbernauld housing sub-market area there is a significant surplus in the five year effective private housing supply. Therefore, I have focussed on the wider North Lanarkshire administrative area, where the parties disagree. In doing so I have considered whether the two adjustments that the appellant has made to its "gross" supply findings are reasonable.

25. With regard to the disputed sites, I agree with the appellant that HfS plays an important role in the HLA process – providing its own and its members' views of the robustness of the planning authority's conclusions as to effectiveness and programming. However HfS does not have a veto, and the mere existence of a dispute from HfS over a particular site should not result in that site being excluded from the five year effective supply unless such a conclusion is justified by the evidence.

26. The appellant believes the significant differences between HfS's programming and the council's, show a common theme: that the council's assumptions are not supported by robust or realistic evidence and fail to properly assess the marketability and ownership (and hence deliverability) of sites. The appellant points out that robust and realistic programming are identified in PAN 2/2010: *Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits* as key requirements of HLAs. To be effective, it advises that sites need to be free of technical, marketability and ownership constraints, among others.

27. No party is able to predict effectiveness with absolute certainty. I have carefully considered the exchanges between the council and HfS over the 2019 HLA, which the appellant has provided, along with the appellant's own conclusions on the disputed sites. From this I have not attempted to calculate the precise extent of the effective supply. Instead, I have looked at the evidence to support the appellant's arguments to reduce the significant surplus in supply that it identified in its "gross" five year supply (which is broadly consistent to the picture obtained in the Potassells Road appeal using the 2018 HLA) to determine whether there is, in fact, a shortfall and if there is, broadly how serious it is.

28. Some of the disputed sites appear to have been regarded as effective in a number of HLAs, and yet remain undeveloped. I can appreciate why this would prompt HfS to question the council's assumptions. The appellant suggests that the authority has a track record of ignoring HfS input when describing potential sites as effective. However, the failure of a site to come forward as predicted could be attributable to a wide range of factors that may not be site- or developer-specific, or capable of being predicted in advance. Therefore, while I have considered the circumstances of all of the sites in question in order to determine whether a long period of inaction points to a particular problem, I have not approached the issue from the standpoint that there is necessarily anything wrong in how the council predicts effectiveness.

29. For some sites such as Clydesdale Works, which has apparently been regarded as effective since 2013 and has particular physical development challenges, I agree with the appellant that prospects of development seem uncertain. However, that site is not programmed in the 2019 HLA to deliver homes within the next five years so this has no bearing on the sufficiency of the five year effective supply. For other major redevelopment sites such as further development at Ravenscraig, the 2019 HLA expects some output within the five year period (although the majority would be later). I note the dispute over how realistic that may be, but I find no convincing evidence that the predictions made in the 2019 HLA are unrealistic or unreasonable. In any event, even if one excluded from the five year effective supply, the predicted output from all of these large regeneration sites, this would not demonstrate a five year supply shortfall.

30. The council refers to an Action Programme, which is required to accompany its proposed LDP once adopted, setting out how that plan will be implemented. Some of the sites that HfS has disputed are proposed to be allocated in the proposed LDP and the

council is confident that the accompanying Action Programme could address any site-specific issues that would impede the delivery of those allocated sites. It is unclear from the evidence that is before me how effective that process would be, so I have given that factor very limited weight.

31. In a number of instances, the council points out that its conclusions as to site programming have been provided by the site owner / prospective developer. I find it reasonable to assume that such a party is best informed about their development intentions.

32. There are other sites where HfS has questioned a site's marketability. The council's response – that the owners of the sites in question have actively promoted them for allocation as housing development sites in the proposed LDP, does not tackle the question of whether the market would support their development within the next five years. However, having considered the location of the sites, I see nothing to suggest an obvious marketability issue.

33. Taking all factors into account, including the fact that a new LDP is close to being adopted (which issue I discuss in more detail below), I find insufficient evidence to deduct any of HfS's disputed sites from the 2019 HLA findings. And even if all of the HfS disputed sites were removed from the 2019 HLA effective supply, the appellant's own figures do not provide compelling evidence of a shortfall in the effective all-tenure or private sector supply across North Lanarkshire.

34. Turning to demolitions, I note that this issue was discussed in the report of the examination of the proposed LDP. The council's position there was that its much publicised long term aspiration to pursue the demolition of all of its residential tower blocks has become the latest line of argument from the development industry against the adequacy of its proposed LDP housing land allocations.

35. Aside from the point that the demolition of social housing blocks is unlikely to create additional demand for market housing, the council's position is that those seeking to rely upon demolitions misunderstand how a social landlord manages its stock and its tenants over time. It points out that before a home is demolished, its occupants will have been found alternative council accommodation. In some cases, the occupancy of blocks intended for demolition has been allowed to run down over a period of time by not replacing tenancies that have become voided by previous occupants moving away or dying. Of 1700 homes that are proposed to be demolished, 754 have been voided (allowed to become vacant) with 95% of the remaining households having agreed a tenancy solution with the council, leaving only 48 households requiring a solution. It refers to its New Supply programme of council house building and its purchase of open market homes to use as council stock through the Empty Homes and Open Market Acquisition Schemes.

36. I am persuaded by the council's arguments that simply deducting the planned level of demolitions from the effective supply is not justified and, as the tower block demolition programme is accompanied by the provision of alternative council housing, such an approach could significantly and without justification, downplay the true extent of the effective supply.

37. Furthermore, the council argues that if, despite what it has said about the issue, it were considered necessary to revisit the impact of demolitions on housing supply, this would be a matter for the next review of strategic policy. I note that the reporter who considered the issue in the proposed LDP examination, thought it would be inappropriate for the LDP review process to address the issue, even if Clydeplan's demolition assumptions did not take account of the scale of the council's demolition proposals. He thought (and I agree) that this is a matter for a review of strategic policy. And I find the consideration of an individual site development proposal is an even less appropriate mechanism for the consideration of this issue than a review of the LDP.

38. As I am not convinced that there is a shortfall in the five year effective housing land supply, either in the Cumbernauld housing sub-market area or across North Lanarkshire as a whole, while the planning balance remains tilted in favour of approval on account of the age of the local plan, it gains no additional weight from this factor. And as the support that is potentially offered to greenfield housing proposals by Clydeplan policy 8 only applies where a shortfall in the five year effective housing land supply arises, this proposal can draw no support from that policy.

39. The council's response to this appeal confirms that, if an appeal on grounds of non-determination had not been made, it would have refused planning permission in principle. In addition to being contrary to local plan policy NBE3, as discussed above, it finds conflict with local plan policies DSP1, 2 and 4. These strategic policies apply to all applications for planning permission.

40. Policy DSP1 requires additions to allocated land supplies to be justified in terms of supply and demand. For housing proposals, the assessment criterion is the need to maintain a five year housing land supply at all times. For the reasons set out above, I find insufficient evidence to justify this proposal in such terms. Therefore, I agree that the proposal is not supported by policy DSP1.

41. Policy DSP2 deals with the location of proposed additions to the plan's allocations. Seven locational assessment criteria are set out. I am satisfied that the proposal is capable of satisfying those relating to environmental assets, accessibility, community, town centres and health and safety. However, it would be inconsistent with the urban regeneration criterion, to the extent that it would not use urban brownfield land. The proposed incursion of development into the green belt would also depart from the green belt criterion, which seeks to maintain clearly defined urban / rural boundaries. Developments not consistent with policy DSP2's locational criteria are required to be justified both in terms of need and benefit under Clydeplan strategic policy 10. This is a policy in the now superseded Clydeplan, so is no longer part of the development plan. However, as I have found the proposal not to be justified in terms of need, I conclude that it is contrary to policy DSP2.

42. Policy DSP4 is concerned with the quality of development. Its assessment criteria relate to points of design and layout that should be capable of being satisfied in detailed design proposals for the site if I were to grant planning permission in principle. Therefore, I find no conflict with this policy.

43. Overall, I find the principle of developing this site for housing to be contrary to key strategic elements of the development plan that deal with the quantum and location of non-allocated development. While I believe the site could be developed without conflicting with

certain policies concerned with detailed design matters, my overall conclusion is that the proposal is contrary to the development plan.

The emerging LDP

44. The appeal site was proposed for allocation in the proposed LDP but was rejected. The report of the examination confirms that this was because sufficient housing land had been identified elsewhere to meet the Clydeplan housing land requirement and because this site makes a positive contribution to the function of the green belt in this locality.

45. The proposed LDP is very close to adoption and, in accordance with SPP paragraph 34, it is necessary to consider whether allowing this appeal would prejudice the emerging plan. Given the significant scale of the proposed development and the imminent adoption of the proposed LDP, in the examination of which it was decided other development sites rather than this site should be allocated for residential development, I have no doubt that a decision to allow this appeal would prejudice the emerging LDP, contrary to SPP.

Other matters

46. In responding to this appeal, the council provided justification for the level of developer education contributions it had required, which the appellant had previously considered inadequate. However, as I am not minded to allow this appeal, it is not necessary for me to consider this issue.

47. The appellant has prepared a Cardowan Moss Management Plan, which sets out its commitment to maintain and improve the natural habitat and recreational accessibility of the SINC. This notes that the fields that are proposed to be developed, drain into the SINC and maintain the high water table necessary to sustain the wetland habitat. In order to prevent the Moss drying out or being contaminated by oils or other contaminant run-off, the Management Plan would introduce various water management measures. The habitat management aspects of the Management Plan would introduce standing open water habitat (presently absent from the SINC) and reduce the dominance of reedmace and the potential for encroachment by trees and shrubs. Boardwalk access would be provided to allow the public safe access to the area, and information boards to provide informal education. A management period of five years is suggested, followed by transfer to the council. I am satisfied that the Management Plan is a material consideration on the positive side of the planning balance.

Conclusions

48. As already set out, I find the proposal to be contrary to the development plan. However, as part of the development plan – the local plan, is out of date, SPP confirms that the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development will be a significant material consideration and the planning balance is tilted in favour of approval.

49. The Court of Session in the 2020 Gladman case found that a housing development which would remedy, to some extent, a housing shortage is something which almost inevitably would contribute to sustainable development and would, therefore, benefit from

the tilted balance. However, as I have found no shortfall that this proposal could remedy, this finding does not assist my assessment of this issue. In order to determine whether this proposal would contribute to sustainable development it is necessary to be guided by the principles set out in SPP paragraph 29. These principles are also more broadly relevant to an assessment of the proposal's likely positive and negative effects in what is commonly referred to as the planning balance.

50. The first requires due weight to be given to net economic benefit. There is no evidence to suggest any negative economic consequences from the proposal so I am satisfied that the significant economic activity it would generate during the construction period (estimated at £50 million) and once occupied, would represent a net economic benefit to which significant weight should be given. I have found from my analysis of the 2019 HLA that there are other housing sites that are effective or capable of becoming effective and, as a consequence, no shortfall in the five year effective housing land supply. Consequently, I have borne in mind that it is quite possible that the development of this site could be at the expense of another.

51. The second sustainability principle expects proposals to respond to economic issues, challenges and opportunities as outlined in local economic strategies. The appellant believes the proposal would assist in delivering North Lanarkshire's Economic and Regeneration Strategy 2014 – 17. It has not explained the basis for that conclusion, provided a copy of the strategy, or confirmed that it remains up to date. The council has not refuted the appellant's claim, but given the lack of detail provided it is difficult to give this matter much weight.

52. The third principle expects development to support good design and the six qualities of successful places. Although this is an application in planning permission in principle, where few design details have been provided, I see no reason why these objectives could not be achieved on this site.

53. The appellant believes the proposal would satisfy the fourth principle, which is concerned with making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure including town centre and regeneration priorities. This is on the basis that it would make efficient use of the site and, by increasing the local population would support existing and new services. I disagree with those conclusions. The development of this greenfield, green belt site when there is no demonstrated shortfall in the effective housing land supply would be likely to divert development activity away from more appropriate sites including those in need of regeneration, contrary to this sustainability principle.

54. The fifth principle is concerned with supporting delivery of accessible housing and other development. I have no concerns with the accessibility of this location and I am satisfied that this principle is satisfied.

55. The sixth principle would also be met because the infrastructure requirements of the proposal, including the need to provide developer funding for additional education provision, could all be secured by a planning obligation.

56. There is nothing unusual about the proposal's consideration of climate change issues. However, in this reasonably accessible location where there are no concerns with

flooding, the usual energy efficiency measures could ensure that the seventh sustainability principle was achieved so far as could reasonably be expected from a proposal of this kind.

57. The eight principle relates to improving health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity including sport and recreation. I see no reason why these expectations could not be met in any detailed proposals drawn up for the site.

58. The ninth principle requires regard to be had to the principles for sustainable land use set out in the Land Use Strategy. Of particular relevance to a housing development proposal are the principles that: where land is highly suitable for a primary use, this value should be recognised in decision making; effects on ecosystems should be understood and optimised; landscape change should be managed; greenhouse gas emissions should be minimised; priority should be given to restoring land that has ceased to fulfil a function because it is vacant or derelict; and outdoor recreation should be encouraged. I have no concerns with most of these; the exception being the priority that should be given to examining options for restoring derelict or vacant land to economically, socially or environmentally productive uses. When there is no demonstrated shortfall in the supply of effective housing land and there are sites allocated for housing development that are vacant and/or derelict, the development of a greenfield, green belt site, which could divert development activity away from sites requiring regeneration is in clear conflict with this principle of the Land Use Strategy.

59. The tenth principle is concerned with cultural heritage protection, which is not an issue with this proposal.

60. The eleventh is concerned with protecting, enhancing and promoting access to natural heritage. The site would deprive existing local residents of access to the site for informal recreation, but would improve access to Cardowan Moss to the south. I would regard this as, at best, a neutral effect.

61. I have no concerns with how the proposal would deal with waste reduction, waste management or the promotion of resource recovery. To the extent that these are relevant, there is no reason to suspect the site could not be developed in a way that would satisfy these objectives.

62. The final principal is about avoiding over-development, the protection of amenity and the consideration of water, air and soil quality. Some loss of amenity for those living close to a large development site is almost inevitable due to the change such development brings to its local environment. In the case of this site, the loss of a valuable space for informal recreation would add to that effect. I have no concerns with over-development or with water, air or soil quality and my conclusion is that, overall, this principle would be satisfied.

63. As set out above, I find that the appeal proposal should be capable of satisfying most of the sustainability principles that I believe should inform an assessment of whether it would contribute to sustainable development. However, in two important respects – which go to the principle of development rather than points of detailed design, I find the proposal would fail to adhere to those principles.

64. I find the proposal to be contrary to the fourth principle, which is concerned with making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure including town centre and regeneration priorities. And I find conflict with the Land Use Strategy. In both cases, the concern is with the likelihood that allowing this appeal, when there appears to be no shortage of effective land for housing, including urban brownfield land, would divert development activity away from locations that would be more likely to deliver regeneration.

65. Urban regeneration and the importance of the green belt to securing that, are key themes of both the local plan and the proposed LDP.

66. The local plan confirms that the aim of its green belt policy is to focus development activity on urban regeneration. It confirms the significance of derelict land in North Lanarkshire, that this is often less attractive to developers and explains that this can lead to pressure to develop in the green belt.

67. The proposed LDP confirms that the purpose of the green belt is to protect the setting of communities, support regeneration by directing growth to urban areas, protect natural assets and provide a high quality environment. Like the local plan, it seeks to resist development in the green belt that is not for agriculture, forestry, recreation, tourism or which needs a green belt location.

68. The apparent sufficiency in the supply of effective housing land also casts some doubt upon the value of developing this site in socio-economic terms, due to the potential for there to be alternative sources for such benefits that would, potentially, not be delivered if this proposal were to proceed.

69. Gladman [2000] found that the existence of one or more adverse findings in relation to the SPP paragraph 29's thirteen guiding principles to sustainability does not prevent the operation of the tilted balance, but it may result in the balance tilting back to a refusal.

70. Taking all factors into account, I conclude that the disadvantages I have found with the proposal – namely the prejudicial effect it would have on the emerging LDP and the likelihood it would divert developer attention away from more suitable sites, significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits it would bring. For those reasons, I conclude that planning permission in principle should be refused.

David Buylła

Principal Reporter