

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Blackcountrycorestra](#)  
**Subject:** Re - Black Country Core Strategy Consultation  
**Date:** 18 August 2017 09:17:08  
**Attachments:** [Black Country Core Strategy.rtf](#)

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## Re - Black Country Core Strategy Consultation

The people of the Black Country were not asked if they wanted a Police Commissioner, an elected Mayor or a joint Strategy with Birmingham and the rest of the surrounding LAs. Lack of support for such matters was reflected by the extremely poor turnout when the elections actually took place for the above 2 positions.

Again we have not been consulted whether or not we want a "Black Country Core Strategy", it has just been foisted upon us !

You are admittedly allowing people to have their say, but will you really take any notice of what we say. Surely you will just plough ahead as usual. After all Public opinion is seen as an obstacle to remove, not a reason to change direction.

Your brief multiple choice questionnaire is simply a dumbing down of the situation, you haven't provided enough space for anybody to actually express a considered opinion, hence this letter.

The big issue as far as I am concerned is your plan to identify land in the Green Belt and presumably on agricultural land as well, to build on in the future. Bearing in mind only 12.4% of land in all England is designated Green Belt.

Why therefore is this core strategy being projected 19 years ahead, instead of the present strategy that was only for 6 years ?

LAs only need to identify within their local Plan a programme for building in the next 5 years to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, although it is worrying that only 41% of LAs have such a plan.

Doing the maths from your own projections, NOT EVIDENCE, you have sufficient sites in the urban area including homes being built, homes that are already planned and new high density sites for 56,000 homes. At around 4,000 houses per year that is 16 years supply.

If you reduce your future strategy to say 6 or even 10 years there will be no need to identify Green Belt or other Agricultural land to build on at all.

The danger of identifying any land in the Green Belt and/or on Agricultural land now, means developers will want to build on this first, because its cheaper and unfortunately you will let them, in order to meet your commitments.

Already Developers, Builders and Land Barons are themselves identifying land of this sort where LAs have no local plan in place and are likely to say yes to planning applications to meet their central government commitments.

In 2011-12 35% of houses built in rural areas were affordable, the proportion has effectively halved to a mere 16% in 2015-16 as house builders have been able to renege on affordability commitments using the viability assessments set out in Government policy. Faced with the prospect of an appeal or a failure to meet targets

LAs have waded through developments with greatly reduced affordable housing proportions.

Before retiring I worked in the construction industry as both a builder and developer for some of the biggest names still operating. I therefore can assure you that I know what I am talking about. Profit is King, there is no question of these companies being public spirited, they can only be reined in by legislation !

None of your projections can be hard and fast in 2 years, let alone 19 - the demographic will have changed, Brexit will alter the way we do business, more industrial land (Brownfield sites) will become available. On line shopping will inevitably change our town centres for ever and drone deliveries will change things even further. More people will work from home and electric cars are coming. Its a very brave man indeed that thinks he can predict what will be happening under the headings you are quoting in 19 years time or even before !

Instead of reviewing the Green Belt a Moratorium of at least 10 years should be placed upon it.

Your comments on protecting the environment are unnecessary, all the matters you refer to should be dealt with via the planning process for new build.

Over the last 10 - 20 years in order to save money more and more local hospitals and care facilities have been closed in the area and playing fields built on or left to run wild so they cannot be used properly. So what with the legacy of hospitals built using PFI, where is the money going to come from to provide for the items listed in your rather pathetic questionnaire under 6, 7 and 8 ?

Yours in fear and trepidation

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.