



27th November 2024

Dudley Planning and Regeneration
Council House
Dudley
DY1 1HF

Re: Dudley Draft Local Plan - Corbett Meadow

This representation **supports** the following policies of the Draft (Reg19) Dudley Local Plan: -

DLP LGS1 Corbett Meadow Local Green Space (LGS)

As a long-standing local resident I have over the years witnessed extensive housing development such as Withymoor Village in Amblecote reducing the amount of natural green space in the Ward to an absolute minimum with only Corbett Meadow remaining untouched as a precious and so special urban green space in the area. Further housing development over and above that now approved for the nearby Old Wharf Road brown-field site will place even more significant pressure on an already overloaded infrastructure such as roads, GP surgeries and schools which have all recorded recent concerns. The Corbett Meadow has massive potential for green social prescribing by the landowners (Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) in line with modern trends and NHS Policy. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of being outdoors to people's mental and physical health, as well as the inequality of access to green space. The NHS Long Term Plan commits to significantly expanding the number of social prescribing link workers in primary care. Social prescribing and community-based support enable GPs, other health and care practitioners and local agencies to refer people to a link worker who gives people time and focuses on what matters to the individual. For some people this will be green social prescribing, which links them to nature-based interventions and activities, such as local walking for health schemes, community gardening and food-growing projects. Greater access to green space is connected to better health and wellbeing. Doing activities in green spaces or simply spending time in nature is beneficial in different ways. For example, going for a walk at their local park can help patients manage their weight and prevent chronic non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. Green spaces also promote a sense of being connected to nature as well as encouraging social connections with others. These connections are good for our mental health and wellbeing, helping us experience lower levels of stress, fatigue and anxiety, among other benefits. Interacting with green spaces is particularly beneficial for vulnerable populations. Those with greater access to green space experience lower levels of health inequalities linked to income deprivation (Mitchell & Popham, 2008). Research also shows that equitable access to green spaces in England alone could save the NHS £2.1 billion every year (An Estimate of the Economic and Health Value and Cost Effectiveness of the Expanded WHI Scheme 2009, 2009).

Our recent experience with Covid-19 has demonstrated the need for greater access to green space - as these areas have been havens for communities during these hard times - as well as ensuring a more sustainable health system through a decrease in demand for services. Green prescribing can tackle both these issues and remove the claimed need to sell the meadow for housing development as a short-term financial gain.

I fully **SUPPORT** the proposal for the Corbett Meadow to be designated as a Local Green Space as outlined in the comprehensive underpinning LGS application document.

DLP 31 Nature Conservation

The location of Corbett Meadow is rare within an urban area, it has an important connectivity to the Coalbourne Brook Valley and is afforded some protection by its designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation [SINC].

The Meadow holds a variety of declining habitats, the historic natural pignut grassland, two ponds and wetland area and mature/veteran trees, all provide a habitat for mammals, birds, amphibians and insects, a place for cover to feed, sleep & breed. These natural habitats are declining countrywide so it is so important to protect and enhance those that remain, to maintain numbers and to encourage further species that rely on this ecology to flourish.

Historically the meadow has been used for grazing and haymaking, any future plans implemented should continue this regime is to maintain the meadow flora.

I fully **SUPPORT** the designation of Corbett Meadow as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. (SINC)

DLP 60 Area of High Historic Landscape Value

With its historic Pignut grassland including pockets of ancient woodland with veteran trees, the undulating landscape of Corbett Meadow is very attractive offering stunning views of historical industrial landmarks. The meadow itself is the last remaining recognizable part of historic Amblecote and the only example left of the areas rural background.

On maps prior to the building of 'The Hill' mansion before the mid 1800s the topography of the meadow has remained virtually unchanged to the present day. Using these maps there is the possibility of remains of a Windmill on the highest point by the area known as Windmill Hill. (See document *'The Last Meadow'*)

A vast proportion of the estate has already been lost to housing, what remains of the estate is the historic meadow of 14 acres (5.72 hectares). This unique area must remain in the heart of an extremely built-up area; it is an irreplaceable natural / heritage asset, if managed for all to enjoy. It serves as the green lungs of the local community.

Past owners of 'The Hill' mansion and estate were industrialists, mainly Glasshouse owners, John Grove, Thomas Rogers, George Mills. This last parcel of land must surely be included within the Glass Quarter. The last purchaser of 'The Hill' was John Corbett born in the nearby vicinity of the Delph he had a humble upbringing from canal carrying to becoming extremely wealthy in the salt industry. He never forgot where he came from, his intention was to give something back to the people of Stourbridge and surrounding areas, he achieved this by purchasing the 32acre (12.94 hectares) 'Hill' estate in Amblecote and converting it into a hospital.

The legacy of the philanthropist John Corbett very much lives on in Amblecote through road names, local industry and more than anything else the Corbett Hospital on The Hill Estate which John Corbett gifted to the people of Stourbridge - the site is often referred to when giving directions to those who don't know the area in detail.

The history of John Corbett is well known and locally people look upon him with pride and affection. The Lodge Building by the Corbett Gates bears his coat of arms and more modern tributes to this great man are displayed on the exterior pharmacy walls just below the meadow and very appropriately on John Corbett Drive.

It would morally be quite fitting if the remaining meadow was once again used to benefit the local community in the way that he originally prescribed and intended.

The designation of the Corbett Meadow as an Area of High Historic Landscape Value is wholly justified and I fully **SUPPORT** it. Give this so special urban green space the protection it has earned and deserves.

Save the Corbett Meadow - When it's Gone it's Gone Forever!

Lance Cartwright
Resident