

## Protest grows on homes bid

by Sarah Walsh

---

Developers keen to build homes on Green Belt land at Gilstead are offering 'sweeteners' in the form of environmental benefits, it has been claimed.

Illingworth Morris wants pasture land at Milnerfield, off Primrose Lane, Gilstead, Bingley, to be reclassified as building land. At the moment it is protected Green Belt land.

Representatives of the company were due to argue their case at today's public inquiry into Bradford Council's unitary development plan, at Victoria Hall, Saltaire. The council was defending its decision to keep the land as Green Belt.

Many of the Primrose Lane residents have objected strongly to the idea of new homes nearby and have written to the council, Illingworth Morris, and local MP Sir Marcus Fox expressing their views. Sir Marcus is

a non-executive director of Illingworth Morris.

Penny Ward, of the Aire Valley Conservation Society, say: "There's massive local objection to any development on the Milnerfield site."

At this stage only the principle of whether or not to build homes is under discussion. There are no detailed proposals on what form it would take.

However Illingworth Morris is suggesting a development of 25 'cottage-style' houses in a courtyard from. It promises to steer clear of 'suburban' type designs and is also offering to open up new public footpaths, create a heritage trail leading to Saltaire and turn nearby woods over to the expert care of the Woodlands Trust.

The land once formed part of the grounds of a mansion owned by the Salt family. The old gatehouse –

now derelict – may be restored as part of the plans.

Mrs Ward says these offers of environmental improvements are simply sweeteners to help the company's case.

John Collins, estates manager at Illingworth Morris, said this was not the case. "The modest amount of development we are proposing will benefit the area."