
EXAMINATION STATEMENT – MATTER 6

Hart Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2016-2032

Representations on behalf of
Gallagher Estates and Barratt Homes

October 2018

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**HART LOCAL PLAN:
STRATEGY AND SITES 2016-2032**

**REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF
GALLAGHER ESTATES AND BARRATT HOMES**

OCTOBER 2018

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Gallagher Estates and Barratt Homes, who have land interests at Winchfield which forms part of the "Area of Search" (AoS) for a new settlement under emerging Policy SS3.

1.2 Representations have been made on behalf of our Clients throughout the production of the emerging Local Plan. As the "area of search" also covers land at Murrell Green which is promoted by Lightwood Land, this Statement has been prepared in consultation with Lightwood Land as part of the on-going collaborative approach.

1.3 Notwithstanding our Clients' land interests, these representations have been prepared in recognition of prevailing planning policy and guidance, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) that relates to the 2012 NPPF.

1.4 These representations respond to the Inspector's questions within Matter 6 and have been considered in the context of the tests of 'Soundness' as set out at Para 182 of the NPPF 2012, which requires that a Plan is:

- **Positively Prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where reasonable;
- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternative, based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities;
- **Consistent with National Policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

2.0 RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

QUESTION 6.1 Has the Council's affordable housing need been robustly calculated, in accordance with national policy?

- 2.1 Yes, we consider the Council has calculated the affordable housing need robustly in accordance with national policy relating to affordable housing and the associated National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraphs 021-025). Therefore, we are satisfied that the Council's evidence base in this regard is sound and that the affordable housing annual need figure of 306 dwellings, set out in the Council's Affordable Housing Background Paper (HOU5), is justified.

QUESTION 6.2 Will the proposed housing requirement deliver sufficient affordable housing to meet identified needs?

- 2.2 No. The housing requirement itself does not ensure sufficient affordable housing is delivered to meet needs over the plan period, however the Local Plan as a whole does. This is because the Local Plan has not treated this requirement as a maximum and instead enables a significant boost in affordable housing through the area of search for a new settlement.
- 2.3 The Local Plan housing requirement of 388 homes per annum in Policy SS1 is an uplift of 6 homes per annum against the Objectively Assessed Housing Need in the SHMA. The Council's evidence is that there is annual need of 306 affordable homes per annum. The main way in which affordable homes are delivered is through planning obligations.
- 2.4 If we were to assume that all sites delivering towards the 388 homes per annum target were delivering the proposed 40% affordable housing in Policy H2, this would mean approximately 155 affordable homes per annum could be delivered. In reality, Policy H2 does not seek all sites to deliver affordable housing and not all of the sites allocated have achieved 40% affordable housing. Most notably the allocation at Hartland Park will deliver 20% affordable housing on site. Therefore, the affordable housing achieved without the new settlement will be lower than 155 homes per annum.
- 2.5 However, in response to this evidence and in accordance with Paragraph 47 of the NPPF the Council has made a policy decision through Local Plan Policy SS3 to boost supply of housing, including affordable housing.

- 2.6 The promoters of the AoS are committed to delivering 40% affordable housing. The scale of the new settlement in terms of housing numbers is a matter for the DPD process but if the new settlement was in the order of 5,000 dwellings, then this would provide a boost of around 2,000 affordable homes to that otherwise committed in the supply. As such whilst the Council is not looking to increase their requirement they are putting policy measures in place through the Local Plan Policy SS3 to deliver, among other things, significant affordable housing.

QUESTION 6.3 Is Policy H2 justified and consistent with national policy?

- 2.7 Although the Plan is being examined under the NPPF 2012, it is relevant that Policy H2 is not consistent with the NPPF 2018, which may cause challenges with its implementation.
- 2.8 Policy H2 has incorporated and is consistent with the thresholds set out in the Planning Practice Guidance that accompanies the NPPF 2012. Namely that:

“Contributions should not be sought from developments of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area)”
(Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 23b-031-20161116)

- 2.9 However, Paragraph 61 of the NPPF 2018 has clarified the instances where the provision of affordable housing should be sought. Namely:

“Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer).”

- 2.10 Major development, as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order as being 10+ units with site area over 0.5ha or a floorspace of 1,000sqm and sites over 1 hectare.
- 2.11 Accordingly, the opening paragraph of Policy H2 would need a relatively minor wording change to meet this criterion. This would not make the policy unsound against the NPPF 2012 but would ensure that it remains consistent with the NPPF 2018.
- 2.12 We are satisfied that the remainder of the policy has been justified and is consistent with the Council's evidence base.