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Judy Holmes

Assistant Chief Executive
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Ref: 32195/4

Dear Judy

Burgess Hill Northern Arc

Further to our positive recent meeting I am, as agreed, writing to you in order to agree a fully collaborative way forward in the delivery of the Burgess Hill Northern Arc. We now have the Inspector's questions / issues relating to 'other' non OAN issues which includes the Northern Arc (Policy DP9).

As discussed at our meeting, all developer interests (Gleeson / Rydon and Wates) have indicated that they want to progress planning applications at the earliest opportunity and are all willing to commit significant resources to achieving planning application submissions within the Northern Arc area (for land in their respective control). From Gleeson's perspective, my client would like to be in a position to submit planning applications at the earliest possible opportunity with the hope that they could, collaboratively with the Council, secure planning approval within the 16 week determination period.

I am sure you are aware that the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is also very keen to progress the delivery of the Northern Arc; the site itself being identified by the government as a priority site for housing delivery. Through our joint discussions you know that their facilitation role through infrastructure funding is being discussed at length with the Northern Arc developers. Subject to resolution, this will ensure the upfront delivery of key infrastructure to support the whole development that we acknowledge to be a key concern for your members.

Further to our November statement submission to the Examination, discussions have also been taking place between Gleeson and a potential purchaser relating specifically to land controlled by Keevil.

The key area of land under discussion relate to the south of the A2300; the only area where there is a current policy conflict between the Northern Arc developers and Mid Sussex District Council. The benefit of this area from the potential purchaser's perspective is:

- It is a self-contained land parcel that can be directly accessed from the existing highway.
- The area is suitable, in landscape and spatial planning terms, for higher density development.
- The area is very accessible to local schools, leisure, local retail and public transport.
- The area is not reliant upon the delivery of wider site infrastructure (such as the northern link road) and as such can be delivered rapidly.

Housing Trajectory

The potential purchaser's interest in delivering housing to the south of the A2300 would allow Gleeson to review its housing delivery trajectory.

The Northern Arc developer submissions to date have relied upon a relatively traditional approach to planning and land sale / delivery. In this scenario, following the receipt of outline planning permission, the lead developer would market the site or phase of a site to a number of house builders who would competitively bid for the land. This process can be complicated and take time for contractual 'completion'. During the time up to completion there is risk for both parties that one or the other will not 'complete'. It is therefore usual that condition discharge and work on reserved matters submission will only commence following completion. That is often why the time gap between outline planning approval and delivery is so wide. Our current delivery trajectory submitted in our November 2016 statement to the Examination assumed outline planning application submission at the end of February. This resulted in approximately 255 dwellings being completed within the five- year land supply window from District Plan adoption. As you know, this trajectory was based upon our assumption that your policy position on reducing the 30 Ha employment allocation at Burgess Hill could reduce to 25 Ha with the residual 5Ha being used for housing.

Whilst, clearly, a submission of a planning application within this area will not now be possible by the end of February, a submission by April could be possible. This would be subject to board approval and necessary land equalization agreements being in place. Clarification on the policy position relating to the 5Ha of potential residential land to the south of the A2300 is key to bringing forward this work. Significant technical work has already been undertaken, including all relevant EIA chapters, so sufficient progress has been made for an outline planning submission. Subject to the potential purchaser progressing reserved matters at the earliest opportunity, Gleeson could agree a revised expedited delivery strategy. The revised trajectory would relate solely to the early delivery of the 'south of A2300 phase' and could realistically deliver an additional 175 dwellings within the period up to the 20/21 monitoring year, thus providing a total of 430 dwellings delivered within the five year period.

This would strengthen further your five-year land supply and result in the position where you may not need to identify an additional 175 dwellings at Burgess Hill, or elsewhere in the district at this time. The timescale below is, in Gleeson's opinion, achievable.

- Certainty on residential capacity i.e the potential for residential development to the south of the A2300. **Feb 2017.**
- Complete work on IDP and comprehensive masterplan. **April 2017.**
- Prepare and submit planning application for land south of A2300. **April 2017.**
- Resolution to grant planning permission and sign s.106 agreement based upon agreed IDP. **August 2017.**
- Complete land sale assuming negotiation twin tracked with planning process for land south of A2300. **November 2017.**
- Submit reserved matter application for land to the south of the A2300. **November 2017.**
- Approve reserved matter application. **Feb 2018.**
- Condition discharge and enabling works for first completion. **August 2018.**
- First monitoring year completions. **April 2018 / March 2019.**

In Gleeson's view this would deliver the following housing trajectory. It should be noted that the Rydon and Wates components of delivery reflect that submitted in November, with the increased rate relating solely to the area south of the A2300 within the overall Northern Arc West masterplan area.

Table 1: Indicative Housing Trajectory

Years (date)	Years (no.)	Northern Arc West (Gleeson/ Rydon)	Northern Arc Central (Wates)	Northern Arc East (Rydon)	Total Units (per annum)	Total Units (Cumulatively)
2016/17	Policy situation clarified by MSDC and IDP agreed.					
2017/18	Planning Process / Planning Approvals in outline. Eastern Parcel first land sale and reserved matter approvals					
2018/19	1	50	0	25	75	75
2019/20	2	100	0	50	150	225
2020/21	3	100	50	55	205	430
2021/22	4	100	75	0	175	605
2022/23	5	100	90	60	250	855
2023/24	6	100	90	100	290	1145
2024/25	7	100	90	50	240	1,385
2025/26	8	100	90	50	240	1,625
2026/27	9	150	90	50	290	1,915
2027/28	10	150	90	20	260	2,175
2028/29	11	150	90	0	240	2,415
2029/30	12	100	90	0	190	2,605
2030/31	13	60	90	0	150	2,755
2031/32	14		90	0	90	2,845
2032/33	15		60	0	60	2,905
2033/34	16		25	0	25	2,930
Grand Totals		1,360	1,110	460	2,930	

In terms of planning justification for the reduction in the employment allocation, the following provides a robust narrative. More detail is set out in my Examination statement already submitted.

- As set out in detail within my Examination statement to DP9, your employment advisor, Chilmark consulting, confirms that the conclusions on employment floor-space is not intended to be a precise requirement. A reduction of 5Ha of the 30Ha proposed employment allocation falls within the range identified by your evidence base and would not prejudice the employment allocation's function.
- There is current overprovision of employment land against forecast demand to meet future employment growth from within Mid Sussex.
- Employment land demand within the evidence base assumes accommodating a wide range (between 25% and 50%) of unmet needs from other authorities.
- Even when taking into account adjacent local authority employment needs, a 5Ha reduction in employment at the Northern Arc would still result in a significant surplus of employment land when taking into account the proposed science park and reduced allocation at the Northern Arc.

- The SELAA identifies a pool of appropriate employment sites distributed throughout Mid Sussex comprising 77Ha. Should the Council consider additional land is needed for employment it could allocate it through a subsequent Site Allocations Local Plan.
- In retaining the whole area of land to the south of the A2300 for employment, the Council is making a choice to prioritise the safeguarding of land for future employment need over the allocation of land for housing in this area.
- Without the release of this land for housing, the Northern Arc will deliver 200 less dwellings than the 2,930 currently proposed by the Northern Arc developers.

As previously discussed, Gleeson would be happy to discuss any transfer of open space between its land control boundary (Gatehouse Lane) and built employment / residential development to ensure control through land ownership is outside any developer interest. In addition you should note that neither Gleeson, Rydon nor, to our knowledge, Wates control any land immediately to the south of Gatehouse Lane.

We would greatly value working with you through the remaining Examination, presenting a fully joined up strategy for housing delivery. As stated earlier, we can justify a more expedited housing trajectory within the context of a potential purchaser interest in bringing forward housing. However, as discussed, in order to progress this mutually beneficial strategy we will need some certainty that the Council's position on the 5Ha of land to the south of the A2300 could be more flexible.

Both Scott Chamberlin (Managing Director of Gleeson Developments) and/or I would be more than happy to meet you again as a matter of urgency to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely



Roger Tustain
Managing Director

cc. Scott Chamberlin, Gleeson Developments
Simon Knight, Wates Developments
Kevin Willox, Rydon Homes