

From: Bob McCurry [<mailto:bob.mccurry@bartonwillmore.co.uk>]
Sent: 11 January 2017 14:17
To: Pauline Butcher, Programme Officer
Cc: 'Mid Sussex District Plan Representors'; Sophia Thorpe - Thakeham Homes (sophia.thorpe@thakeham.com)
Subject: RE: Mid Sussex District Plan Examination

Dear Pauline,

Thanks for your email below and the Notes relating to the Housing Matters Hearing Sessions on the 12th and 13th January 2017.

I represent Thakeham Homes in relation to their strategic land interest to the West of Burgess Hill (representor number 20329) and I can confirm that I will not be in attendance on the 12th and 13th January. Thakeham Homes are a member of the Developer's Forum and they will be represented by them on the 12th and 13th January.

However, as stated in the Notes you provided, the Inspector has highlighted that:

"MSDC falls back on the SHLAA which has already been criticised as rejecting sites that, subject to mitigation measures, are alleged to be developable. Therefore, whilst it is not my intention to examine omission sites for inclusion in the plan, it will probably be necessary to test the SHLAA analysis against a range of rejected sites to see whether the Council's approach to constraints stand up to closer practical scrutiny. This cannot be carried out by 13 January and I will be asking the parties to (a) agree a suitable list of sites for consideration and (b) consider appropriate hearing dates for this material to be considered (one or two days). The sites should not be limited by the 500 dwelling threshold."

In this regard, our Hearing Statement dated 7th November 2016 (attached) makes specific reference to this aspect and the fact that we have concerns about the methodology applied, and that the approach to the SHLAA Assessment is neither sufficiently up-to-date or accurate in terms of previous representations submitted to the Council.

In addition to our Hearing Statement, representations were submitted to the Council in relation to the land to the West of Burgess Hill by Mr Oliver Harwood of RH & RW Clutton on behalf of a Consortium of Land Owners (known as the Western Arc Consortium) on the:

- 22nd July 2015 – in response to the Pre-Submission Version of the District Plan;
- 13th January 2016 – in response to the Focused Amendments to the Pre-Submission Version of the District Plan.

The Council's SHLAA has not been updated to take account of these representations.

Furthermore, there appears to be inconsistencies in relation to the West of Burgess Hill between the SHLAA Report and the Strategic Site Selection Paper.

As demonstrated in the Vision Document attached at Appendix 2 of our Hearing Statement, it is considered that there are no issues which would render the Site undeliverable or which cannot be adequately mitigated. This should be reflected in the SHLAA.

Thakeham Homes have secured control of the land and can bring the Site forward as a comprehensive development and consider that completion of the first homes could be in Summer 2020 (i.e. within the first 5 years of the plan period) as shown within the Vision Document. This should be reflected in the SHLAA.

Therefore, the methodology and assessment criteria used by the Council is considered to be too stringent for the purpose of identifying land availability and has resulted in suitable land, such as that to the West of Burgess Hill, being discounted unreasonably and too early in the process. This has therefore artificially reduced the capacity of the District to meet its housing requirements in a suitable and sustainable way.

Please see our Hearing Statement (attached) for more information (in particular, paragraphs 2.2 to 2.10) and we would submit that the land to the West of Burgess Hill should be tested further against the SHLAA analysis as part of the Examination process.

I hope the above is helpful and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Regards

Bob McCurry

Director

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