

# **MID SUSSEX ALLOCATIONS DPD EXAMINATION**

## **MATTER 6**

### **SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF**

### **PERSIMMON HOMES LTD & THAKEHAM HOMES LTD**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This submission is made on behalf of Persimmon Homes Ltd and Thakeham Homes Ltd (Thakeham), who have control over land allocated under Policy SA13 of the Plan for the introduction of 300 dwellings at Land East of Keymer Road and South of Folders Lane, Burgess Hill.
- 1.2 Representations have been submitted to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) throughout the emerging Plan process, explaining the appropriateness of the allocation. The current submissions focus upon the specific queries raised by the Inspector in the Matters, Issues and Questions Discussion Note.

## **2. Matter 6.3**

- 2.1 The Inspector asks whether any issues arise from the development allocations on the strategic highways network or any locations with potential highways/pedestrian safety issues. It is noted that with regards the allocation at SA13, a number of local objections were raised to the allocation relating to concern about the impact of the development upon the highway network.
- 2.2 In order to further consider the impact of development at SA13 upon the highway network, a pre-application highways submission was made to the Highways Authority following a meeting between parties. The main Highways Appraisal Assessment is included at Appendix 1 and the response from the Highways Authority, which was received on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021, is included at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 The Appraisal confirms in the summary section that;
- A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken with regards to the safety of the proposed access for 300 dwellings and did not highlight any material concerns.
  - The proposed pedestrian, cycle and emergency access points offer good connectivity to off site infrastructure.
  - West Sussex County Council have confirmed that there would not be a need for a bus service to access the site, but rather future residents would access the existing bus services on Keymer Road and Folders Lane.
  - The development would enable off site enhancements to the pedestrian environment and bus stop provision between the site and the town centre.
  - Following analysis, the site access junction would operate comfortably within capacity.
  - The Keymer Road/Folders Lane mini roundabout would operate over capacity in the '2031 plus committed development' scenario. This has been the case when residential planning applications in the vicinity have been approved previously, and have been justified through enhancements to the highway network.
  - Traffic impact at the off site junctions would not be severe. Suitable for the developers to provide a financial contribution to the County Council to enable suitable funding of highway improvements, secured through a s106 agreement.

- 2.4 The Highways Authority response at Appendix 2 agrees with the findings of the Appraisal and refers to the impact upon the various junctions in the vicinity that would be affected by development of the site. It explains when commenting upon the development impact that whilst queue length and waiting time will increase, the level of such increases are not considered to be severe, and are appropriate in highway terms as a result.
- 2.5 The conclusion to the Highways Authority response clarifies that the impact on the local highway network would not be severe subject to appropriate contributions being provided. It is confirmed that both Persimmon and Thakeham would be willing to make appropriate contributions in this respect.
- 2.6 The Inspector asks about the cumulative impact of traffic conditions in an area and whether it is acceptable for a scheme to be found to have a less than severe impact if it is recognised that the traffic conditions in an area are already severe. The question of whether an impact is severe is inevitably a matter of judgement to an extent, but there will typically be a greater traffic impact in a more sustainable location given that there will generally be greater traffic movements as a result of the proximity to a larger number of facilities and services, and hence activity levels that such a location generates.
- 2.7 Whilst it is not considered that traffic conditions at and around SA13 are currently severe, even if they were considered to be so by some, this should not imply that the location is inappropriate for additional residential development. Whilst the impact on traffic conditions is a consideration, it needs to be balanced alongside the wider sustainability considerations. This is especially the case when the overall proposal can offer enhancements to public transport, pedestrian networks and other highway improvements, as shown for SA13 as set out in submissions at Appendices 1 and 2.

### **3. Matter 6.4**

- 3.1 At 6.4 of the MIQs the Inspector asks if Policy SA35 (which relates to delivery of specific highway schemes) should, amongst other things, be extended to address the traffic impact of allocations SA12 and SA13.
- 3.2 For reasons explained in response to Matter 6.3 above, the Highways Authority has given recent and detailed consideration to a Highway assessment regarding the impact of development of SA13 upon the local highway network. The Highways Authority response confirmed that whilst development of the site would result in additional queues and waiting times at a number of junctions, the impact would not be severe upon the network. Specific highway improvements were therefore not identified by the Highways Authority as being required to appropriately accommodate the proposed development at SA13.
- 3.3 Given that the matter has been considered carefully by the relevant statutory consultee and found to be appropriate without specific highway schemes being required, it is not considered necessary to amend Policy SA35 to include reference to any specific works associated with allocation SA13.
- 3.4 For clarification both Persimmon Homes and Thakeham would expect to work with the Highways Authority to identify potential works and provide financial contributions that would result in a Highways package that appropriately mitigates any impact of the development upon the local highway network. It is however not considered necessary or helpful to identify specific highway schemes as part of policy that the development would be required to deliver.

#### **4. Matter 6.5**

- 4.1 The Inspector asks at 6.5 if it is beneficial or otherwise to identify detailed schemes for highway improvements.
- 4.2 As explained in response to Matter 6.4, in the case of SA13 it is not considered helpful to identify and require specific highway schemes to be undertaken through policy, due to no need having been identified by the relevant statutory consultee for such schemes. It is however recognised that if there is an agreed requirement for specific highway works, then it can be useful to identify such works as being required alongside the delivery of an allocated site.
- 4.3 The use of phased triggers to ensure that such works are undertaken before the impact of development upon the highway network becomes severe is a sensible approach. This can be achieved through the usual course of a planning application being prepared, consulted upon and determined by the use of planning conditions or s106 obligations when detailed improvements have been established and drawings prepared.

