

**BASINGSTOKE &
DEANE LOCAL PLAN
EXAMINATION IN
PUBLIC**

**Issue 5 – Greenfield Site
Allocations (Question 11.10)**

Tuesday 20th October 2015

STATEMENT PREPARED BY:



Woolf Bond Planning
Chartered Town Planning Consultants

On behalf of:

Flavia Estates

Respondent No. 787392

SEPTEMBER 2015

Q11.10

Greenfield Site Allocations: Are the proposed major new developments for new housing and other uses positively prepared, justified and deliverable? Does the level of detail in the policies and Inset Diagrams meet the requirements in the PPG for Local Plans to make clear what is intended to happen in the area over the life of the plan, where and when this will occur and how it will be delivered? (PPG Ref ID 12-002-20140306.)

Site Context

1. Our client's site is defined on Plan DB1 and extends to a total 7 hectares. The land abuts the urban edge of Basingstoke lies within and on the edge of Worting Conservation Area and lies within the Manydown Allocation.
2. As with any site of this scale there are a number of technical and infrastructural matters that require attention to allow the site to come forward for development. However we consider the site could come forward to deliver a substantial proportion of the wider Manydown allocation for up to approximately 200 dwellings.
3. The site benefits from road frontages onto Roman Way to the east and Worting Road to the south. Worting Road forms a key public transport route into Basingstoke. Bus stops exist to the south of the site on Worting Road.

Site Promotion Background

4. As the Inspector will be aware the wider Manydown site was proposed as a strategic mixed use allocation in the Basingstoke Local Plan Review (LPR) in 2005. However as part of the Inquiry, the Inspector recommended that the plan should have an end date of 2011 and therefore concluded that the Plan did not need to allocate land for the period 2011-2016 and the Manydown allocation could be deleted as a consequence. However the Inspector did assess the Manydown scheme in detail in his report and noted the following in respect of land within and adjoining the Worting Conservation Area:

'The whole of Worting Conservation Area is within the Policy D2/MDA annotation on Inset Map 2. The Council's Conservation Area Appraisal (CD/Con/230) and a professional assessment of its character produced on behalf of an Objector emphasise that the distinctive and attractive character of this conservation area derives from the grouping of mainly 18th and 19th century buildings around the Church, Church Lane and Worting Road. On the basis of these assessments, the undeveloped parcels of land in the Conservation

Area to the east, north and west seem to me to provide a broad setting for the core of the area, but to be of little intrinsic value' (para 1.16.48).

'Extensive residential development beyond the boundary of the conservation area would undoubtedly change its setting, but because of the screening from retained and proposed planting and the essentially inward-looking character of the conversation area, I consider that those qualities which make the area attractive and distinctive would be preserved. The MDF indicates that there is scope for new development on some of the parcels of land within the conservation area. This is supported by the owners of the land. There is agreement between these parties that a detailed master-planning exercise is needed to establish the form such development should take in order to preserve the important qualities of the conservation area. Development within the conservation area would change its appearance, but with care, such changes need not devalue what makes the conservation area special. Accordingly, the presence of the Worting Conservation Area within the MDA does not weigh against Policy D2' (paras 1.16.48-49).

(Our underlining)

5. The above confirms that proposed development within and around the Worting Conservation Area was agreed as acceptable between ourselves and the Council at the LPR Inquiry. This position was then supported by the EiP Inspector in his report. **It has therefore been previously agreed by the developer, Council and an EiP Inspector that a material level of residential development can proceed on our client's site without having significant heritage impacts.**
6. The LPR Inspector also considered the matter of phasing on the Manydown scheme and commented as follows:

'The Council accepted at the Inquiry that land within and adjoining parts of the Worting Conservation Area would provide a distinct setting for new development which would assist in providing a choice of housing and thus support high completions rates. I agree. I also accept that land in the vicinity of the junction of Roman Way and Worting Road forms a prominent site on the edge of the MDA and that there would be benefits to the setting and promotion of any MDA for this land to be positively managed from the outset, which might encompass development. This location also has the most frequent existing bus services. These considerations could be taken into account in any further work on the MDF' (para 1.16.53).

(Our underlining)

7. The above confirms a number of important points. First, development in the Worting Conservation Area would **assist in providing a choice of housing**

and thus support high delivery rates. A benefit that cannot be under played given the significant housing needs and tight housing land supply position in the Borough (discussed in statement on Issue 3 (question 4.12). Second, the site is a **prominent one and therefore would benefit from being developed at the outset.** Third, the site's location is the **most accessible part of the site to frequent bus services.**

Proposed Policy Framework

8. Turning specifically to the proposed policy framework, the proposed site allocation is clearly marked in red on the policies map. Further a detailed criteria based policy is provided setting out key issues that need to be addressed when a detailed application or Masterplan comes forward. There is also a requirement for development to be informed through the preparation of a masterplan. Consequently we do not consider there is any need for greater detail to meet PPG 12-002-20140306 requirements. However we do propose some changes to the wording of the proposed criteria so to reflect the site promotion background referred to above.

9. In respect of criterion (h), we propose the following additional wording:

'Conserve and enhance the architectural and historic significance of the Worthing Conservation Area with its listed buildings including Worthing House, respecting their setting, and ensuring sufficient mitigation is put in place when required, whilst acknowledging that some development within the Conservation Area should be acceptable';

10. The above amendment will retain the need to respect the setting of the Conservation Area, whilst acknowledging the outcomes of the LPR Inquiry where the principle of development in Worthing Conservation Area was agreed between all parties.

11. In respect of criterion (i) we propose the following amendment:

'Retain the separate identity and character of Worthing and Wootton St Lawrence, and restrict coalescence between these villages and the new development and retain the separate identity and character of Winklebury, including conserving the ancient boundary of the Roman Road as a green boundary'

12. The removal of the above wording would represent a more 'effective' policy. The wording proposed for deletion represents a duplication of the first half of the sentence. Further its removal would reflect the findings at the previous LPR whereby development in the Worting Conservation Area and between the existing urban edge to Basingstoke and Worting itself was agreed as acceptable. Consequently criterion (i) is unnecessarily prescriptive as presently drafted and should be amended to the above wording.
13. The below section discusses the important role of our in offering an additional development note and logical early phase on the Manydown development. We therefore propose the following additional criterion (v) to Policy SS3.10:

'Land between Church Lane, Worting House and Roman Way, Worting to form part of a distinct residential neighbourhood within the allocation and to form one of a number of start locations.'

14. The above wording would again provide for a more 'effective' policy by securing much needed deliverability to assist secure a 5 year housing land supply in the period up to 2020.
15. Subject to the above amendments we are accepting of the policy framework proposed in Policy SS3.10. The rest of this statement refers to the important role of our client's site in deliverability and masterplanning terms to securing a high quality and timely scheme at Manydown.

Site Specifics & BDBC's Illustrative Masterplan

16. We note the Illustrative Masterplan for Manydown (June 2014 – Final Draft) includes some illustrations and strategic masterplan options (Figure 7) showing how Manydown could be developed up to 2029. It is evident that the Masterplan relates solely to land within the ownership of the Borough and County Council's and not the private landowners who have interests in particular around Worting. This land has been excluded.
17. Whilst we have no objection to the policy map itself we do note that the site's exclusion from the Masterplan appears illogical and unwarranted. Our client's site (forming the area to the north, north east and east of Worting) has three important characteristics:

1. The land, benefits from frontages onto Roman Way and Worting Road and is therefore immediately available for development. It also has a direct frontage to the Worting Road that benefits from high frequency bus services.
2. The residential neighbourhood located to the northwest of our client's site is to have a strong relationship with Worting Wood and Middle Field (the linear open space that can run along either side of Church Lane) providing a green north/south linear open space corridor between Worting and the Country Park. This is illustrated below on the extract taken from the Illustrative Masterplan:



Purple line drawn on showing Church Lane, linking to site to the north and Worting Road to the south.

Rough outline of our client's site (in red).

The above plan illustrates a green link running from our site's northwestern boundary all the way through to the proposed country park. Church Lane will also form an important visual feature when viewed from the residential development to the north.

Church Lane (that forms our site's western boundary) will provide an important integral green link between Worting and the country park. To plan and implement the residential development to the

north/northwest of our client's site as part of the first phase yet exclude land that comprises the immediate setting to church Lane that would also enable the proper planning and completion of this important linear open space link between Worting and the country park would represent an illogical form of master planning for the development of this important first phase.

3. Our client's land includes land recognised as an important gateway entrance to the Manydown development from the east. Walnut Tree Field (forming the site's southern field) will form an East Gate entrance to the Manydown development. The availability of this land is important to the start of the development in terms of its "gateway" function.
-
18. The three identified characteristics represent integral parts of the development that form important components to the first neighbourhood on the eastern side of the Manydown development. It is likely that it is for these reasons that the LPR Inspector identified that this land should be managed positively from the outset of development. It is therefore critical that the Masterplan approach does not result in leaving areas undeveloped and unmanaged which will in turn detract from the environment, setting and function of the proposed neighbourhood.
 19. In this regard a number of positive benefits arise from including our client's site within the initial phase(s) of the overall development. These in particular relate to:
 - The deliverability of important, functional and structural open space strategies that provide linkage between the Worting and other elements of the Manydown Development Area (such as the country park).
 - Enhancement, management and availability of an important gateway to the Manydown scheme.
 - Enable a much needed early start on the scheme to assist in important deliverability issues.
 - Inclusion of an area where the development here would be different/distinctive to much of the strategic allocation thereby adding to

housing choice and enhancing the deliverability rate, which is important at the start of a major development.

- Make appropriate use of unconstrained yet available land in a sustainable location well related to an existing/planned improved public transport corridor.
 - In contrast to much of the Manydown Development area provide housing at an earlier date that is not reliant on other key infrastructure such as a link road.
20. Our responses to other issues have confirmed there is a need to commence delivery at Manydown as soon as possible if a 5 year housing land supply is to be approached let alone exceeded. Secondly, in order to meet the ambitious trajectory scheduled at Manydown (200 units in 2018/19, 300 units in 2019/20, 300 units plus per annum from thereon), there is a need for additional start locations within the Manydown site so to improve the deliverability of the scheme in meeting pressing housing requirements.
21. With these commitments in hand, there should be no reason why, locations that are physically available for development such as our client's site cannot come forward immediately. Our client's site is both available for immediate development and, its delivery is consistent with the previous Inspector's aspirations for its delivery and the location of initial phases of the Manydown development.

Summary

22. Our client's site forms a logical early phase, in addition, not at the exclusion of others, within the Manydown development and an important part given its gateway role and proximity to bus services. Further it offers an additional development node so to secure early delivery of the Manydown site as required by the Council's housing trajectory. Such credentials have been previously agreed with the Council and were referred to by the LPR Inspector. We would request that the Inspector considers and acknowledges the site's role as an important and logical first phase of housing development in his report. In addition, some amendments are proposed to the Policy SS3.10 framework (at paragraphs 11 and 13) that we consider would secure a more 'effective' policy having regard to the NPPF tests of soundness.

Annex A

