

Ipswich Core Strategy Examination

Hearing Statement

Matter 4a: Residential and Sustainable Development Policies and General Development Policies

1 June 2016

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MATTER 4a – Residential and Sustainable Development Policies and General Development Policies

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This hearing statement is submitted on behalf of CBRE SPUK III (No.45) Ltd and Mersea Homes Ltd.
- 1.02 CBRE SPUK III is the owner of land south of the railway, west of Westerfield Road (excluding land controlled by Ipswich School), and forming part of the Ipswich Garden Suburb. The land is subject to an allocation for residential-led development under Policy CS10 of the extant adopted Core Strategy (2010). It is known as the 'southern neighbourhood' or 'Fonnereau Village' under the terms of the emerging SPD for the Ipswich Garden Suburb ('IGS'). A planning application for this land was submitted in June 2014 and remains to be determined.
- 1.03 Mersea Homes have a promotional agreement with CBRE SPUK III (No.45) Ltd, but separately own land to the east of Westerfield Road (forming the substantive part of the 'Eastern Neighbourhood' or 'Red House village' site). That land is proposed to be allocated for development under Policy CS10 as is now proposed by the Council in the Core Strategy now before the Inspector.

2.0 RESPONSE TO THE INSPECTOR'S QUESTION

Question 4.1: Are the policies ... for residential and sustainable development and general development principles soundly based? If you contend that they are not how should they be modified?

- 2.01 It is our view that policies CS8, CS12, DM1, DM2, DM24 and DM30 are not soundly based as considered against the provision of paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'). We have consistently raised objection at previous stages of the plan making process, and do so again now. We consider that the proposed policies are variously:
- Not supported by adequate or appropriate evidence base (therefore not **justified**).
 - Not **effective** insofar as the policies will not provide deliverable outcomes.
 - Not **consistent with national planning policy** in relation to specific matters.
- 2.02 Each policy is dealt with in turn.
- Policy CS8**
- 2.03 Policy CS8 provides that the mix of dwelling sizes and types will be in accordance with the SHMA and HNA.
- 2.04 The original SHMA (*SCD13*) is now eight years old. The last update (*SCD12*) is four years old. Neither document can, in any way, be considered up-to-date or reflective of the current housing market. The SHMA was supported by an Affordable Housing Site Viability Study, also published in 2008. Further viability testing was undertaken (*LPCD026* and *LPCD027*) and published in December 2014. This does not represent an up-to-date evidence base as required by paragraph 158 of the NPPF.
- 2.05 Exceptions to policy are allowed. These may be when the site location, characteristics or design justify a departure; where local housing needs justify an alternative, or where a different approach would be justified to meet targets in some other way. These exceptions effectively determine that an alternative to the SHMA conclusions may be acceptable in a wide range of circumstances.
- 2.06 Our view is that the policy is wholly ineffective. It is based on out-of-date evidence, but notwithstanding that, then allows all manner of exceptions to be applied. The

policy should **either** be based on up to date evidence, **or** it should be responsive to up-to-date local circumstances – it cannot be both.

2.07 Our alternative proposed wording is set out below:

The Council will plan for a mix of dwelling types to be provided, in order to achieve mixed and sustainable communities. All major schemes over 10 dwellings will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes in accordance with the Council's Housing Needs Study and Strategic Housing Market Assessment, taking into account:

Exceptions to this approach will only be considered where:

- a. The site location, characteristics ~~or~~ and sustainable design justify a different approach; ~~or~~*
- b. A different approach is demonstrated to better meet housing needs in the area; ~~or and~~*
- c. A different approach would expedite the delivery of housing needed to meet targets and is otherwise acceptable in other planning terms.*

The Council will support Self Build, Custom Build and Co-Housing developments for residential accommodation in appropriate locations, in the interests of supporting high quality homes which meet the identified needs of the Borough.

Policy CS12

2.08 Policy CS12 requires the provision of at least 35% (by floorspace) affordable housing on sites within the Ipswich Garden Suburb, and that at least 80% of affordable housing provision is provided as affordable or social rented stock.

2.09 This policy position is out of date, unrealistic, not justified by evidence and will lead to developments not being viable. It is also inconsistent with the policy position for development outwith the IGS, where provision of 15% is sought.

2.10 As noted above, evidence on housing need, the housing market and viability is dated and does not accord with the requirements of paragraph 158 of the NPPF. Furthermore, it is entirely inconsistent with national government's position in relation to the provision of Starter Homes as now reflected in the provisions of the Planning Act 2016, which has now received Royal Assent. Whilst Regulations are yet to be drafted, the government's direction of travel is evident.

2.11 As part of the ongoing discussions regarding viability and infrastructure delivery at the IGS, affordable housing provision is being discussed in the range of between 6% and 20.5% (by floor area) , taking into account the infrastructure requested to serve development. This is likely to culminate a position consistent with that as proposed to be applied to the remainder of the Borough (i.e. 15%) This work is informed by detailed, specific and up-to-date assessment as applied to the particular circumstances of the IGS, and is therefore a more reliable and appropriate basis than dated Borough-wide analysis for informing likely provision of affordable housing in the IGS.

2.12 For the reasons set out in summary above, we recommend the following wording be adopted for Policy CS12:

The Council will seek to ensure that a choice of homes is available to meet identified affordable housing needs in Ipswich. This will be achieved by requiring ~~new development at the Ipswich Garden Suburb to provide for at least 35% on-site affordable housing by total floor space and new developments of 10 dwellings or more (or on sites of 0.5ha or more) in the remainder of the Borough to provide for at least 15% on-site affordable housing by total floor space unit number. At least 80% of Affordable housing provision shall consist of Starter Homes, affordable rented~~

~~homes, or homes for social rent, intermediate homes, or other affordable tenures as may be defined by Government and in a tenure proportion consistent with National Policy.~~

~~The Council will only consider reducing the requirement for the proportion percentage of affordable housing units on a particular development site, or amending the tenure mix to include more intermediate housing, where alternative lesser provision is outlined by the applicant within a site-specific viability assessment (using a recognised toolkit) and the conclusions are accepted by the Council's Independent assessor.~~

~~b. An accepted independent review of development viability finds that alternative provision on viability grounds is justifiable; and~~

~~c. The resultant affordable housing provision would ensure that the proposed development is considered sustainable in social terms through its delivery of housing integration, with particular regard to meeting the identified need for small family dwellings where these can reasonably be integrated into the scheme.~~

Policy DM1

- 2.13 Policy DM1 seeks to establish policy requirements which are inconsistent with national government's position and are therefore inconsistent with national policy. No justification is provided for the imposition of these requirements.
- 2.14 Paragraph 173 of the NPPF makes it clear that viability must be a primary consideration when establishing policy requirements. This position is enforced by the Written Ministerial Statement of March 2015¹ which emphasises that local planning authorities should not set "any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings". Further provisions under recent legislation² require policies on energy consumption to be consistent with national policy.
- 2.15 We recommend that the following amendments are made to Policy DM1:
- ~~New development shall be required~~ will be encouraged to achieve a high standard of environmental sustainability. This will can be achieved by the following standards:
- ~~a~~ New build residential development should achieve reductions in CO2 emissions of 19% below the Target Emission Rate of the 2013 Building Regulations (Part L);
 - ~~a b~~ New build residential development should will be encouraged to meet water efficiency standards of 110 litres/person/day;
 - ~~b e~~ Conversions and changes of use of existing buildings providing new residential dwellings should will be encouraged to achieve a minimum of BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Very Good standard or equivalent;
 - ~~c d~~ New build non-residential development of 500m2 and above for the whole development should will be encouraged to achieve a minimum of BREEAM Very Good standard or equivalent;
 - ~~d e~~ Conversions and changes of use to non-residential uses with an internal floor area of 500m2 and above should will be encouraged to achieve a minimum of BREEAM Very Good standard or equivalent.
- ~~Development will also be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage and water efficiency measures as required by DM4.~~

¹ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015>

² The Planning and Energy Act 2008.

~~All developments exceeding the thresholds above shall achieve the above standards as a minimum unless, in exceptional circumstances, it can be clearly demonstrated that this is either not feasible or not viable.~~

Policy DM2

- 2.16 The provisions of Policy DM2 are unrealistic and are not supported by robust evidence in relation to viability and feasibility. Whilst we recognise the Council's ambition, mandatory imposition of this policy is not appropriate. We recommend the following amendments to the policy:

~~All new build development of 10 or more dwellings or in excess of 1,000 sq. m of other residential or non-residential floorspace shall be encouraged to provide at least 15% of their energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. If it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not either feasible or viable, the alternative of reduced provision and/or equivalent carbon reduction in the form of additional energy efficiency measures will be required. The design of development should allow for the development of feed in tariffs.~~

Policy DM24

- 2.17 The provisions of Policy DM24 could effectively be set out as an integral part of Policy CS12 rather than be split across two policies. We also consider that clauses (a) and (d) are unnecessary. The standard to which affordable homes are built is determined by the registered provider, and the provision of parking can be determined according to extant parking standards.

Policy DM30

- 2.18 Policy DM30 is not an effective policy, since it seeks to establish density parameters on the one hand, then provides a sequence of comprehensive exceptions on the other. It fails to provide certainty, and offers no clarity in respect of the Council's expectations. We recommend the following amendments to the policy:

~~The density of new housing development in Ipswich will be informed by the site location, characteristics, constraints, sustainable design and housing needs with guideline densities for broad areas identified as follows:~~

~~a. within the town centre, Ipswich Village and Waterfront, development will be expected to achieve a high density of at least around 90 dwellings per hectare (dph) or greater;~~

~~b. within the remainder of IP-One, District Centres and an 800m area around District Centres, development will be expected to achieve a medium density of at least around 40 to dph (the average will be taken as 45 dph); and~~

~~c. elsewhere in Ipswich, lower-density development of around 35dph or lower will be expected required (the average will be taken as 35 dph).~~

~~Exceptions to this approach will only be considered where:~~

~~d. the site location, characteristics, constraints or sustainable design justify a different approach; or~~

~~e. a different approach is demonstrated to better meet all housing needs in the area.~~