SITES AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD)

LDF EXAMINATION

Inspector’s Pre-Hearing and Other Questions – ID/18 (December 2013)

Statement prepared by:

WOOLF BOND PLANNING LLP

On behalf of:

TAYLOR WIMPEY UK LTD. AND MEYRICK ESTATE MANAGEMENT LTD

REPRESENTATION NUMBER: 224

JANUARY 2014
Introduction

1. This statement has been prepared by Woolf Bond Planning on behalf of our clients, Messrs Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd. and Meyrick Estate Management Ltd, and relates to the Inspector’s pre-hearing and other questions as set out in Inspector’s Notes ID/17 and ID/18. A separate, but related, submission is being made by the Meyrick Estate Management Ltd (Reference 370) to address the soundness of European environmental mitigation in policy DM2b.

2. Our clients have a controlling interest in land east of Stem Lane, which was included as a possible housing allocation option within the Sites and Development Management DPD Public Consultation Document (January 2011) but was not taken forward as a formal allocation within the Proposed Submission Document.

3. This statement responds to the questions posed by the Inspector relating to New Milton housing allocation policies NMT4 (Land east of Caird Avenue), NMT1a (Land west of Moore Close) and NMT1b (Land off Park Road, Ashley).

4. Our statement should be read in conjunction with our past representations including our letter to the LPA dated 15th November 2013 in response to the Main Modifications and Draft Mitigation Strategy Consultation November 2013.

Response to Inspector’s Note ID/18

SANG Provision

5. Paragraph 11 of ID/18 notes the requirements for around 1ha SANG land per 50 dwellings as set out within the LPA’s draft Mitigation Strategy for European Sites SPD. It is highlighted that the proposed provision for SANG on land East of Caird Avenue (NMT4) is below the SPD requirement at 1.21ha for 90 dwellings. Furthermore, it appears that the land to be used for the SANG comprises existing open space. We question whether this can be justified.
6. This submission supplements our continued concerns regarding the deliverability and viability of NMT4, and further highlights the benefits of an alternative housing allocation on land at Stem Lane, where substantial onsite mitigation in the form of SANG can be achieved.

7. In addition, we note that the two additional sites proposed for housing development within the LPA’s Main Modifications document (NMT1a and NMT1b) will rely upon financial contributions towards SANG provision to offset the impact of development. As no SANG can be provided onsite, this will rely on SANG sites elsewhere. It is unclear as to whether there is sufficient capacity at existing SANG sites to accommodate the developments. Furthermore, the additional SANGs proposed in New Milton under policies NMT10 and NMT11 do not meet the conventional design, size and suitability criteria. NMT10 is not currently available whilst NMT11 whilst requires enabling development so again its availability is uncertain.

8. In comparison, delivery of housing and employment uses on land at Stem Lane could include provisions for onsite SANG as part of such a scheme, which would in turn reduce the pressure on existing SANG sites and offers an immediately deliverable option to meet defined needs. In addition the area suitable for SANG is contiguous with the proposed site for SPA mitigation NMT11 allowing the combined sites to form a highly attractive alternative green space which will have a much better chance of diverting trips from the SPA than the small and fragmented SANG sites included in the draft SPD for New Milton.

**Additional sites at New Milton**

9. At paragraph 31 of the Inspector’s note ID/18, it is stated that the consideration of the additional housing allocations at New Milton at the January hearings will be primarily concerned with the general principle of residential development in such locations, rather than specific housing numbers or scheme layout. However, we would note that the capacity of these sites is fundamentally linked to their viability, such that some consideration of the housing numbers is necessary at this stage. It is for the reasons set out in our previous representation that we continue to raise concerns over the
deliverability of a suitable level of housing on the two sites proposed, such that delivery of the housing on land at Stem Lane should be considered as an alternative allocation.

10. An additional point concerns CIL requirements. The Inspector has raised issues on this point not least in respect of double counting of CIL and SANG. A further question, given the exemption of affordable housing from CIL, is how SANG is to be provided with NMT1a and NMT1b if only low levels of CIL are paid? Failure to provide SANG would be contrary to the Habitat Regulations and development of these sites could not proceed. This further underlines the advantages of the Stem Lane site where adequate onsite SANG can be provided as part of the scheme.

\[\text{NMT1a Land west of Moore Close}\]

11. Paragraph 33 of ID/18 questions whether the proposed residential development would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the adjoining Old Milton Green conservation area.

12. As set out in the submitted Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (2012), “development on the site could have a negative impact on the adjacent Old Milton Green Conservation Area which would require mitigation. Further information may be required.” Until the impacts of development are fully understood in the regard, we do not feel that allocation for development in this location is appropriate.

13. Paragraph 35 of ID/18 requests clarification as to whether land to the west of Moore Close is Grade 1 agricultural land.

14. Using DEFRA’s MAGIC mapping software we have assessed the status of the land, and it would appear that the site is Grade 1 agricultural land.

15. Whilst we await confirmation on this point in the Council’s hearing statement, we refer the Inspector to paragraph 112 of the NPPF which states that:
“Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.”

16. If the site is confirmed to be Grade 1 agricultural land, then the Council’s approach is not consistent with the provisions of the NPPF, given that alternative sites are available which would not result in loss of the highest grade agricultural land.

NMT1b Land off Park Road, Ashley

17. Paragraph 39 of ID/18 questions whether the development of land off Park Road, Ashley would result in adverse impacts on the adjoining Stanley’s Copse SINC.

18. We refer the Inspector to our previous representations, which set out our concerns regarding the capacity of the site to deliver the number of housing units required to make any meaningful contribution towards the District’s affordable housing requirement.

19. One of our primary concerns relates to the proximity of the site to Stanley’s Copse SINC which will require a landscape buffer of no development to protect the ecological asset. Without adequate mitigation/buffer the development could lead to a negative impact upon the adjacent Stanley’s Copse woodland.

20. It is unclear from the Council’s proposals how much of the site would be given over to ecological mitigation, although the 2011 Consultation Document suggested a 25m buffer on the northern part of the site would be appropriate.

21. This will clearly have an impact upon the deliverable area of the site such that we would question the deliverability of the 20 units proposed without detriment to the character of the area through a cramped form of development.
22. Whilst we note the Inspector’s intention to focus on principle alone at this stage, we would point out that if an appropriate number of units cannot be achieved on the site then an alternative, more appropriate site should be considered instead. Land at Stem Lane could provide for a character led housing development and employment with onsite SPA mitigation which would meet the housing number required whilst allowing for a substantial landscape buffer to the adjoining SINC.

Summary

23. We consider that allocation of two small sites whilst retaining NMT4 is a flawed approach to meeting the short term need for affordable housing, such that the alternative allocation of land at Stem Lane should be considered as a way of delivering the 43 units required to ensure the delivery of the full 30 affordable units required in the early part of the plan period.

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