

## **Joint Henley & Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan (JHHNP) Review**

### **Response to Examiner's Question raised at the Hearing on 1 August 2022**

1.1. This statement is in response to Question asked by the examiner on 01 August 2022. The examiner's question was:

*"what would the potential significance of the yield of the site being 130."*

1.2. It is considered that this site would remain as a suitable site for allocation as part of the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan.

1.3. The site was previously included in the SHELAA with a larger site area and indicative development yield, the AECOM site assessment concluded that the site area put forward in the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites would be suitable for allocation. This conclusion remains the same with an indicative site capacity of 130 homes.

1.4. The evidence provided by Landscape Capacity Assessment is based on a yield of 130 dwellings on this site based on a nominal density of 25dph. The assessment concludes that the site could be considered further as a site option on landscape and visual grounds and also that a full detailed landscape and visual impact assessment will be essential to inform the final capacity of the site in landscape terms.

1.5. The design requirements set out in Policy DS7 include the requirement for a LVIA which complies with Local Plan Policy ENV1. The site area has not changed and would continue to utilise the least sensitive part of the site and link NDP Site M into the existing settlement pattern.

1.6. The site would provide greater public benefit by providing 40% affordable housing in accordance with Policy H9 plus the provision of 20 community led houses. The community led housing would provide affordable houses at social rent levels that would be retained as affordable in perpetuity. This would contribute towards meeting the need as identified through the Housing Needs Assessment.

1.7. The increase in yield would help to boost the supply of housing for the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes advocated through Local Plan Policy H11: Housing Mix and Section 5 of the NPPF. A mix of housing would help to retain a healthy and vibrant community providing many social benefits.

1.8. NPPF section 11 highlights the importance of planning policies promoting an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.

1.9. As part of the Regulation 16 Consultation, SODC advised that the DS7 policy would not accord with policy STRAT5: Residential Densities in the Local Plan. Point 3 of this policy states "Sites well related to existing towns and villages and served by public transport or with good accessibility by foot or bicycle to the town centres of Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford or a district centre within Oxford City should be capable of accommodating development at higher densities. It is expected that these sites will accommodate densities of more than 45 dph (net) unless there is a clear conflict with delivering a high-quality design or other clearly justified planning reasons for a lower density."

- 1.10. STRAT5 also states that the density of a development should be informed by; i) the capacity of the site and the need to use land efficiently in accordance with Policy DES7: Efficient use of resources; ii) the need to achieve high quality design that respects local character; and iii) local circumstances and sites constraints including.. the need to protect or enhance... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.11. Allowance has been made to ensure the site can deliver an appropriate density of development, whilst ensuring that the site responds to its location within the AONB. It is considered that 130 dwellings would make efficient use of developable land with the aim of accommodating the maximum amount of development that is consistent with protecting the AONB in ways that comply with NPPF and policies within the Local Plan including STRAT5 and ENV1.
- 1.12. The increased yield would remain lower than 45dph and there would be +2ha available for landscaping and open space as part of proposed mitigation. The indicative site plan provided by the landowner, as part of the Regulation 16 consultation, demonstrates what could be achieved.
- 1.13. Dwelling numbers included in the site policy is expressed as approximates, how many dwellings can be accommodated in a satisfactory way on this site will be determined at planning application stage based on the merits of individual proposals and how they comply with the policies of the JHHNP and Local Plan. Further work as required through the policy, including a Landscape and Visual Appraisal, will inform the final numbers on the site.
- 1.14. This site lies in a sustainable location meeting the three objectives of sustainable development as set out in section 2 of the NPPF (economic, social and environmental) and is considered the most appropriate site for development. The alternative of a plan without allocation of Highlands Farm would be associated with even greater drawbacks.
- 1.15. Overall, it is considered that the conclusions of the NPC would remain the same, that the site would be in compliance with NPPF and the Local Plan including Policy ENV1 and would meet the other basic conditions test.