

Matter 6 – General Site Specific Issues

Introduction

- 1 This written statement is submitted on behalf of our client Marchfield Homes Ltd and concerns the proposed housing allocation H21 (formerly H/24) and associated village boundary alteration VB/1, relating to the site known as Garden Scene Nursery, Chapel Croft, Chipperfield.
- 2 We continue to strongly support the proposed allocation of this site for residential development, which we consider is suitable and immediately deliverable, and which is capable of making a contribution to the housing land supply. Similarly, we are also supportive of the amendment to the village envelope boundary

Responses to Inspector's Questions

Q.1: Are the allocated sites appropriate and deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure, affordable housing and other facilities, and taking account of environmental constraints?

- 3 We consider that the allocated sites are appropriate and deliverable, and are capable of providing the necessary infrastructure, affordable housing and associated facilities, having regard to environmental constraints.
- 4 In the case of our client's site, the Site Allocations Plan identifies a net site capacity for the Nursery of 12 dwellings. Planning Requirements are set out which include the need for:
 - a high quality scheme given the site's location within a Conservation Area;
 - access from Chapel Croft;
 - maintenance of the existing access arrangement across the site to adjoining land;
 - provision of a mix of two storey housing; and
 - retention of existing local retail use.
- 5 As proposed housing allocation H21 has been the subject of positive Pre-app discussions, we consider that it is deliverable in the early part of the plan period and thus is capable of contributing to boosting the Council's 5 year housing land supply.

Q.2: Are the detailed requirements for each of the allocations clear and justified? Have site constraints, development mix and viability considerations been adequately addressed? Are the boundaries and extent of the sites correctly defined?

- 6 In November 2014 we set out in our previous representations to the Pre-Submission Draft of the Site Allocations Plan the benefits of the proposed re-development of the Nursery Site, which is no longer viable as a garden centre

business. These included the fact that the proposed allocation would retain and safeguard the current village store / post office located on the site.

- 7 Although we fully support proposed allocation H21, we continue to object to the fact that the net capacity of the proposed allocation has been identified as only 12 dwellings. We pointed out that this represents a low density for the 0.7 ha site of about 17 dwellings per hectare (dph). We also referred to the fact that a draft plan had been prepared by Marchfield Homes that demonstrated that 17 dwellings could be readily accommodated on this proposed allocation. This would have a density of 25 dph.
- 8 The provision of a greater number of dwellings on this site would improve development mix and viability, and make it easier to deliver the community facilities being sought, as well as the range of standard S.106 contributions that will be also be sought by the Borough Council (as highlighted in its Pre-app response letter): affordable housing, child play space, natural green space, Travelsmart and libraries. We have highlighted the potential as part of a residential development to incorporate a new Parish room and store, thus providing an additional benefit to the local community. It would also boost sustainability by ensuring that the land is developed to a density that is sufficiently high to ensure that effective use of land is achieved.
- 9 Consequently, the net capacity for the site should be amended to read '**at least 12 dwellings**'.

Q.3: If there is a need to identify additional land for housing, are the alternative proposals that have been put forward in representations appropriate and deliverable? Have they been subject to sustainability appraisal compatible with that for the Site Allocations DPD and to public consultation?

- 10 No comment.

PC/845/sf
7 September 2016