

Matter 5 – Infrastructure

Introduction

1. This Hearing Statement is prepared on behalf of Redrow Homes South East, who have an interest in the land north of Quinton Road Sittingbourne, which forms part of the North West Sittingbourne allocation in the Swale Local Plan Publication Version, and to which Policy MU1 refers.
2. I can confirm I have seen, agree with and support the contents of the statement submitted by JB Planning Associates on behalf of Persimmon Homes South East, one of the other promoters of the North West Sittingbourne allocation.
3. To this end, I can also confirm, as set out in the statement submitted by JB Planning Associates on behalf of Persimmon Homes South East that the promoters of the North West Sittingbourne Strategic Allocation are working closely with one another and with officers of Swale Borough Council/ KCC/ other statutory providers and the local community to facilitate the delivery of what is the main strategic allocation in the Swale Local Plan.
4. To this end a Development Framework which has been produced in collaboration with those promoting the North West Sittingbourne allocation is at an advanced stage of production, and as set out in the statement submitted by JB Planning Associates this document establishes the overarching design principles that will help guide the development of the allocated site in a comprehensive and structured manner. It is anticipated that this document will be finalised in February, allowing planning applications to be submitted in Spring 2017.
5. In addition to the above, as set out in the statement submitted by JB Planning Associates, a key issue which the Development Framework will address is infrastructure planning for highway improvements to the Grovehurst Junction of the A249 to accommodate the level of growth proposed at the strategic allocation. To this end, as set out in the statement submitted by JB Planning Associates, the promoters' highway consultants have been working closely with the Borough Council, Kent County Council and Highways England to agree the mitigation measures required, as detailed further in response to the Inspector's Questions below.

Question 5.1 – Transport Infrastructure – is the modified Plan supported by robust infrastructure planning which demonstrates that the proposed development is deliverable?

Question 5.2 – Does the Plan include adequate infrastructure planning for highway improvements along the A249 corridor to accommodate growth to the west of Sittingbourne?

6. As also set out in the statement submitted by JB Planning Associates a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has recently been agreed between Swale Borough Council, Highways England (HE) and Kent County Council Highway Services (KCCH) (12 January 2017; SBC/PS/121). This statement covers in detail the infrastructure planning proposed along the A249 corridor to accommodate growth at Sittingbourne. It refers to modelling, design and costing work completed to date on behalf of the North West Sittingbourne promotor's highway consultants, which is set

out in a technical note prepared by Peter Brett Associates (SBC/PS/123b) and the promoters of South West Sittingbourne (SBC/PS/123a).

7. The Highways SoCG describes in para 4.15 how a mitigation scheme for the Grovehurst/A249 junction has been designed and costed on behalf of KCCH at £37m. This scheme was not selected to come forward as part of the Kent bid for Local Growth Funding Round 3. Pending any future bidding, interim mitigation sufficient to support the Local Plan proposals will need to come from developer provision or pooled developer funding.

8. Para 4.17 of the Highways SoCG goes to explain that:

“a deliverable package of interim mitigations has therefore been proposed to support the Local Plan development. This would include:

- *Improvement to the eastern roundabout at Grovehurst, in particular to the A249 southbound off slip and at the eastern roundabout at Grovehurst, to facilitate left turns into Swale Way. This would be likely to include utilisation of land which has been reserved through a S.106 agreement (for the Nicholls transport site north of Swale Way);*
- *Retention of the existing pedestrian crossing at Grovehurst;*
- *Provision of alternative pedestrian and cycle facilities via the Old Sheppey Way and Bramblefield Lane bridge;*
- *Subject to further testing and any mitigation required to the satisfaction of the highway authorities at Bobbing/A249 junction, through Transport Assessment, a proportion of the development at Policy MU1 could be accessed from Quinton Road at the southern end of the allocated site;*
- *Traffic calming measures through Bobbing village.”*

10. Para 4.19 of the Highways SoCG adds that:

“the Council and Highway Authorities also note that some development will need to be delivered at NW Sittingbourne (Policy MU1) and Iwade (Policy New AX5) ahead of the Grovehurst/A249 improvement, but would be expected to demonstrate the its impact could be satisfactorily mitigated”.

11. HE, KCCH and the Council confirm in para 6.1 of the SOCG that they are satisfied that the scope and specification of the work undertaken results in a satisfactory appraisal of the likely impacts of Local Plan development on the A249 corridor. They add in para 6.2 that they are satisfied with the interim mitigation schemes, and that as a result the Local Plan is sound in this respect. More detailed Transport Assessment work in support of the planning applications will provide further detail of the schemes and timescale delivery and enable some development to come forward ahead of mitigation.

12. The interim mitigation scheme for the A249/Grovehurst junction is described in the Technical Note (SBC/PS/123b) prepared by Peter Brett Associates in conjunction with Redrow and GH Dean’s Highway Consultants. This scheme is deliverable on land that is either public highway or on land controlled by the promoters.

Swale Borough Local Plan Part 1 - EIP/Resumed Hearings

Matter 4 - Modifications to Existing Allocations

Statement by Judith Ashton Associates on behalf of Redrow Homes South East - ID no's 72802

- 13.** Given the above we therefore conclude that, as confirmed by the Highway Authorities, the modified plan includes adequate infrastructure planning for highway improvements along the A249 corridor to accommodate growth to the west of Sittingbourne.
- 14.** Whilst I am unable to attend the Examination, I am aware of the fact that JB Planning Associates will be attending on behalf of Persimmon Homes and can provide further information to assist the Inspector if required.