

Matter 24 – Whitchurch Place Plan Area (Policy S18)

Hearing Statement

Response on behalf of

Persimmon Homes (West Midlands) Limited

MATTER 24

Introduction

- 1) Harris Lamb Property Consultancy (HLPC) are instructed by Persimmon Homes (West Midlands) Ltd (**PH**) to prepare a response to the Inspector's issues and questions in relation to Matter 2. PH are promoting land at Whitchurch for residential development, the majority of which currently benefits from a draft allocation in the draft Local Plan, with an additional area of land that is currently not allocated. Our representations and comments focus on the spatial strategy, housing land supply and the suitability of the proposed allocation which we cover in our responses to Matters 2, 3 and 24.

Q1 What is the background to the site allocation? How was it identified and which options were considered?

- 1) No comment

Q2 What is the scale and type/mix of uses proposed?

- 2) The illustrative layout submitted with the PH's representations show the site accommodating 70 dwellings at a density of 41dph. The site is laid out for residential use with associated access, parking, internal roads and public open space. The mix of dwellings is not specified at this time.

Q3 What is the basis for this and is it justified?

- 3) The basis for the proposed uses is in accordance with the draft allocation (WHT014) land at Liverpool Road, Whitchurch which allocates the site for residential development.

Q4 What is the current planning status of the site in terms of planning applications, planning permissions and completions/construction?

- 4) Preliminary work has been undertaken to inform a preparation of a planning application in due course although the promoter is waiting for progress to be made on the Local Plan before submitting the planning application to the Council. The decision to submit the planning application and the exact scope and format of the application will also be informed by the outcome of the additional land that PH are promoting adjacent to the draft allocation and whether or not this is ultimately required or proposed for inclusion in an amended Local Plan.

Q5 What are the benefits that the proposed development would bring?

- 5) The proposed development would deliver 70 dwellings to Whitchurch in accordance with the draft allocation. The site could deliver a policy compliant level of affordable housing along with areas of open space whilst ensuring a high quality design that would make a positive contribution to the local area.

Q6 What are the potential adverse impacts of developing the site? How could they be mitigated?

- 6) Work undertaken to inform a previous planning application at the site confirmed that highways and access issues were considered acceptable and issues relating to drainage were capable of being resolved. Issues were raised in respect of landscape and visual impact but at the time this was largely due to the fact that the site was located outside of the development boundary to Whitchurch. In light of the draft allocation this is no longer the case and as such this concern is no longer relevant. Further concerns were raised in respect of loss of agricultural land although as the site is now allocated for development the Council appeared to have reconciled this loss. A range of ecological surveys have been undertaken that demonstrate that there are no protected species present that would prevent the development of the site.

Q7 How is the site affected by flood risk? How has this been taken into account in allocating the site? How have the sequential and, if necessary, exception tests been applied?

- 7) The site is located within Flood Zone 1 as shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Mapping. The site is not subject to surface water flooding issues.

Q8 What are the infrastructure requirements/costs and are there physical or other constraints to development? How would these be addressed?

- 8) The site is not subject to significant infrastructure requirements in order to bring it forward for development. Other than constructing a new access along with any consequential amendments to the highway in order to facilitate this the site is relatively infrastructure light. Furthermore, we are not aware of any physical constraints that would prevent the development of the site should there be any requirements for additional infrastructure arising from the development such as school places these could be satisfactorily addressed through the payment of any development contributions associated with the submission of a future planning application.

Q9 Is the site realistically viable and deliverable?

- 9) PH confirm that the site is viable and that as a PLC housebuilder the site is deliverable.

Q10 What is the expected timescale and rate of development and is this realistic?

- 10) PH would look to bring the site forward within the first 5 years of the plan period. On confirmation of the allocation PH would look to progress a full planning application. Allowing for the subsequent discharge of condition we would anticipate a start on site within 18-24 months of the allocation be confirmed. PH anticipate that the delivery of 70 units thereafter would take between 18-24 months from the start on the site. It is considered that this is a realistic timeframe and that is deliverable.

Q11 *Is the boundary of the site appropriate? Is there any justification for amending the boundary?*

- 11) PH have submitted further representations about the potential to increase the size of the allocation to include additional land that PH control immediately adjacent to the draft allocation. The additional land was optioned by PH following a discussion with the local planning authority who asked whether they were able to 'square off' the draft allocation. Whilst not a matter for consideration as part of this part of the examination should there be a requirement to identify additional land or sites within the Plan area PH would welcome the opportunity to discuss omission site with the Council.

Q12 *Are the detailed policy requirements effective, justified and consistent with national policy?*

- 12) PH consider that the policy requirements are effective, justified and consistent and support the allocation of the site in the draft Plan.