

Hearing Statement – Matter 7 (North Sunderland)

Sunderland Core Strategy and Development Plan

On behalf of Barratt David Wilson Homes (North
East)(East of Washington: Washington Meadows)

April 2019



I. Introduction

- I.1. This is a Hearing Statement prepared by Spawforths on behalf of Barratt David Wilson Homes (North East)(BDW) in respect of:
- Matter 7: The Strategy and Housing Growth Areas for North Sunderland
- I.2. BDW has significant land interests in the area and has made representations to earlier stages of the Local Plan process.
- I.3. The Inspector's Issues and Questions are included in **bold** for ease of reference. The following responses should be read in conjunction with BDW's comments upon the submission version of the Sunderland Core Strategy and Development Plan, dated July 2018.
- I.4. BDW has also expressed a desire to attend and participate in Matter 7 of the Examination in Public.

2. Matter 7 – The Strategy and Housing Growth Areas for North Sunderland

Issue – This matter considers the strategic policies (SP4 and SS4) and the Housing Growth Areas (HGA7 and HGA8) for North Sunderland.

Strategic Policies

I.1) Are Policies SP4 and SS4 justified and effective?

- 2.1. BDW consider that the general approach the Council has adopted through the above policies and their interaction with other policies and policy requirements in the plan could hinder the potential delivery of housing on the proposed allocations.
- 2.2. The proposed approach towards the housing allocations and other policy requirements could reduce the potential level of housing or even undermine the viability of schemes, hindering the delivery of sites in their entirety.
- 2.3. BDW is particularly concerned for instance with Policy H1 and once this is entwined with site specific requirements and the implications for schemes, in particular the need to deliver 10% of dwellings as accessible and adaptable homes.
- 2.4. BDW therefore consider a flexible approach be adopted through the plan and an increase in the housing requirement should be considered as part of the approach to ensure that the delivery of the OAN is achieved as a minimum.
- 2.5. BDW consider that the general approach the Council has adopted through the above policies and their interaction with other policies and policy requirements in the plan could hinder the potential delivery of housing on the proposed allocations.

- 2.6. The proposed approach towards the housing allocations and other policy requirements could reduce the potential level of housing or even undermine the viability of schemes, hindering the delivery of sites in their entirety.

Identification of Sites

2.1) Do the Green Belt assessments support the HGAs in North Sunderland and demonstrate exceptional circumstances for the removal of land from the Green Belt?

- 2.7. BDW has no specific comment in relation to this issue.

2.2) If exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated have these been clearly articulated in the Plan?

- 2.8. BDW has no specific comment in relation to this issue.

2.3) Are the configuration and scale of the HGAs justified taking into account development needs and the Green Belt assessments?

- 2.9. BDW has no specific comment in relation to this issue.

HGA7 – North Hylton

3.4) Is the site deliverable?

- 2.10. BDW has no specific comment in relation to this issue.

HGA8 - Fulwell

4.4) Is the site deliverable?

- 2.11. BDW is concerned with the deliverability of the Fulwell site (HGA8). The SHLAA suggests the site is an outdoor sports field and is amenity greenspace. There is no evidence of studies being undertaken to understand if the site is surplus to requirements for such purposes. The site appears well used being criss-crossed by a number of formal and informal footpaths.
- 2.12. **BDW is concerned that the site has not met the tests for allocation as it has not been satisfactorily proven to be suitable and achievable and therefore is not deliverable.** Sport England still have an outstanding objection and the Council's response is to propose a modification to the Plan indicating that the site cannot come forward until an up-to-date Playing Pitch needs assessment prepared in consultation with Sports England has been produced. This could take time and also preclude the delivery of the site.
- 2.13. The SHLAA also suggests that the site also has ecological and archaeological interests and is adjacent to a former landfill use and therefore potential contamination issues may arise.
- 2.14. Furthermore, the access appears difficult, it does not appear that an access is feasible from the adjacent small lane and an access directly onto the A1018 is questionable given the duelled nature and status of the road.
- 2.15. The site is not anticipated to come forward until later in the plan period, circa 2029, but BDW question whether the site is actually deliverable.

Infrastructure

5.1) Will the infrastructure to support the scale of development proposed in North Sunderland be provided in the right place and at the right time, including that related to transport, the highway network, health, education and open space?

2.16. BDW has no specific comment in relation to this issue.

Delivery

6.1) Are the assumptions about the rate of delivery of sites in North Sunderland realistic (anticipated delivery is shown in Appendices A, B, F and L of the SHLAA)?

2.17. As stated earlier, BDW question the potential delivery of the site given the constraints identified.

2.18. Notwithstanding the above, the constraints need to be overcome, the site is Council owned and therefore needs to be put to the market, legal agreements need to be drafted and agreed, planning permission needs to be granted, Section 106 Agreement needs to be negotiated, and discharge of conditions and only then a developer can start on site.

2.19. BDW do not consider the site can come forward in 10 years and is a much longer term opportunity.

Proposed Change

2.20. To overcome the objection and address soundness matters, the following changes are proposed:

- Include greater flexibility within the Plan to account for the potential delay in delivery of proposed schemes.

- Remove HGA8 – Fulwell as sufficient evidence has not been produced to demonstrate its suitability and achievability and therefore deliverability.