

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

HEARING STATEMENT IN RELATION TO:

'MATTER 2' - The Plans Strategy

**Progress Planning on behalf of Mr L Mason (Land at Old Moor Lane,
Wooburn Moor)**

PREPARED BY
PROGRESS PLANNING
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING PRACTICE

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Progress Planning act on behalf of the owner of land at Old Moor Lane, Wooburn Moor which has been promoted for development through the plan making process for 130 dwellings. This has included:
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and call for sites submissions
 - Representations submitted on the Draft Wycombe District Local Plan in August 2016. This was supported by an indicative masterplan; a Transport Report; and a drainage and utility assessment.
 - Representations submitted on the Publication of the Wycombe District Local Plan in November 2017. These representations warned the Council of our view that the Plan was not legally compliant and unsound, because it was not positively prepared, not justified and not consistent with national policy.
- 1.2 This statement sets out the concerns with the Council's Strategy, specifically in relation to the approach to plans Strategy.

2. Question 6 – Has the Settlement Strategy (Policy CP3) been positively prepared, justified and will it be effective in delivering sustainable growth?

- 2.1 The consideration of Wooburn, in conjunction with Bourne End, as a tier two settlement is agreed. However, there is an imbalance between the growth attributed to Bourne End (where two sites are allocated) and Wooburn (where no sites are allocated). Wooburn is recognized as being an inherently sustainable settlement, with close links to Bourne End, Loudwater and Beaconsfield.
- 2.2 The Council had the opportunity to accommodate growth in Wooburn through the submitted opportunity at Old Moor Lane, Wooburn. Whilst addressed in further detail in the statement for Matter 6, the Council have made incorrect assumptions regarding the deliverability of the site. It is considered that the lack of allocations in Wooburn is a strategic weakness of the plan, which effects the soundness of the strategy. It is considered that the Council should, via Main Modifications, include the site at Old Moor Lane, amongst others, to ensure the housing needs of Wooburn are adequately accounted for.

3. Question 8 – Is the Spatial strategy sufficiently flexible and can it respond effectively to changing circumstances?

- 3.1 It is agreed that most of the development should be directed to the larger settlements. Whilst dealt with in more detail in Matter 3, there is concern that the Council's plan to meet housing targets is not flexibly, and is reliant on all allocated site / windfall sites and Neighbourhood Plan allocations to come forward and be delivered.

- 3.2 There is no flexibility to account for poor performance in the delivery of housing. Through allocating additional sites for development, the Council are likely to produce a more aspirational and resilient Local Plan.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Council's overall approach to meeting both their employment and housing needs is agreed. However, Wooburn does not benefit from any proposed allocations, which given the sustainable nature of the settlement, is surprising.
- 4.2 The plan is not aspirational or resilient to change in market conditions. It is therefore recommended that Main Modifications seek to:
- Include a Housing Supply buffer, equivalent to at least 1 year's worth of supply
 - Allocate the Old Moor Lane site for residential development (amongst others) to provide much needed residential accommodation for Wooburn