

Careys New Homes

Matter 4 Hearing Statement

Wycombe District Local Plan Examination

Matter 4 – Employment, Retail and Town Centres

Issue: Is the objectively-assessed need for employment soundly based, supported by robust and credible evidence and is it consistent with national policy? And will it be met during the Plan period?

Employment

Question 5 – Will Policy DM28 (Employment areas) provide an effective mechanism for managing new development in strategic and local employment area?

Policy DM28 states that in all areas designated as Local Employment Areas on the Policies Map, development will be mainly restricted to B Class uses. Similar sui generis uses will also be allowed. Certain other uses falling within Class D1 will also be allowed where these comprise clinics, health centres, GP or dental surgeries. Other uses will not be permitted in the designated Employment Area.

Policies Map 3 'Downley and Desborough' identifies the site at Land North of Hughenden Avenue, High Wycombe as Local Employment Area.

Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states that *"planning policies should avoid the long-term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospects of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities."*

It is with consideration that the above site is no longer a viable location for employment use. My client's evidence does not support the identification of this site as an allocation for 'Local Employment Area'. The site has been subject to an employment allocation but has not delivered employment use. We consider that the Council should avoid protecting the site further in accordance with paragraph 22 of the NPPF as there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment use.

Furthermore, the site sits within an area of predominately existing residential use. This includes the 'Hughenden Quarter' which is a development of 97 dwellings that has recently been completed to the north of the site and the Hughenden Park Student Village to the south of the site and Hughenden Avenue.

We therefore consider that the site should not be included as an allocation for employment use and should be included as an allocation for residential development for the reasons set out above. An objection is raised to the allocation of my client's site and an objection is raised to Policies Map 3 'Downley and Desborough'.

In summary, we consider that the Policy DM28 is unsound as it is not consistent with national policy and, for reasons discussed under Policy CP4, shows that the Local Plan has not been positively prepared to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements and is ineffective in terms of cross-boundary strategic priorities.

My client's site at Land North of Hughenden Avenue, High Wycombe is no longer a viable location for employment use and therefore, should not be allocated as Local Employment Area. The site represents an achievable, suitable and deliverable site for a residential allocation to meet the District's housing requirements, to boost the supply of housing and contribute towards the current five-year housing land supply deficit within the District.

Robert Love

Senior Planner, Planning

Bidwells

John Ormond House

899 Silbury Boulevard

Milton Keynes, MK9 3XJ

robert.love@bidwells.co.uk