

Wycombe District Local Plan

Statement of Common Ground: Princes Risborough Main Expansion Area

Matter 8, Questions 1 and 2

23 August 2018

Between:

- 1) Wycombe District Council (WDC) – the Local Planning Authority
- 2) Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC)
- 3) Persimmon Homes Ltd (North London) – the owners of Oak Tree Farm
- 4) Taylor Wimpey – the promoters of the land parcel south of Longwick Road
- 5) Wates Developments. – the promoters of land parcel north of Oak Tree Farm

1. Summary

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by the above parties to assist the Examination-in-Public by setting out the areas of common ground in respect of land south of Longwick Road (the Consortium's land') which is part of the Princes Risborough main Expansion Area (PREA) identified for development within the Wycombe District Local Plan (2013-2033), hereafter referred to as the WDLP. Overall, the parties agree that the WDLP generally, and that the allocation of the PREA specifically, is sound and developable subject to ensuring an equitable, fair and proportionate approach to the funding and provision of necessary planning obligations and supporting infrastructure.

2. Background

- 2.1 WDC has prepared a WDLP for the period 2013-2033. The WDLP proposes a requirement of 10,925 homes across the District during this period. Policies relating to housing delivery are contained within chapters 4 and 5 of the Plan ('The Strategy' and 'What is proposed in Specific Areas').
- 2.2 Policies PR3 to PR8, and PR17 of the WDLP provide the basis for the allocation of the PREA. They set out the key potential land-use and infrastructure requirements for the future development of the PREA.
- 2.3 The key policy requirements for the PREA are to develop the expansion area as an area of comprehensive and sustainable development to deliver:
- A total of 2357 homes, of which 1662 are to be delivered within the plan period (and a further 96 from an existing permission);
 - Major new road infrastructure in the form of a complete alternative to the A4010;
 - Supporting retail, social infrastructure and green and blue infrastructure.

- 2.4 Persimmon Homes has put forward its site for inclusion in the WDLP since May 2015, and has made a number of representations to the Council as part of the Local Plan production process. It has been an active member of the Agents Forum established by WDC to engage with land interests in the PREA since October 2015.
- 2.5 Taylor Wimpey has put forward its site for inclusion in the WDLP since November 2017 (previous to this Persimmon was engaged with this site), and has made a representation to the Council as part of the Local Plan production process.
- 2.6 Apolin Properties, and more recently Wates Developments, has put forward the Jeffries site for inclusion in the WDLP since November 2015, and has made a number of representations to the Council as part of the Local Plan production process.
- 2.7 All of the above have been engaged in ongoing dialogue and discussions with WDC and BCC in relation to future delivery of the Site through the Agents' Forum and a number of separate meetings.

3. Latest position

- 3.1 During the publication consultation (Reg19) of the WDLP, WDC received a number of objections and comments from all parties, relating to core policies, DM policies and policies specific to Princes Risborough.
- 3.2 Persimmon's representation broadly supports the overall vision for the Plan and welcomes the intention to expand Princes Risborough by 2650 homes. It raises concerns about the overall cumulative policy burdens of the Plan (Including Core policies, DM policies and Princes Risborough-specific policies). It presents some criticisms of the viability exercise and wishes to see a clearer way forward on its role in delivery. It is keen to engage with WDC in the preparation of more detailed guidance for the PREA.
- 3.3 Overall, Taylor Wimpey's representation supports the allocation as identified in PR3 and agrees that it is sound. It confirms that its site is deliverable: suitable; available; and achievable. They identify policies PR3 – PR8 as sound.
- 3.4 Overall, Wates Developments' representation finds policies PR3, PR4, PR6 and PR7 (and PR8 by implication) sound, though it suggests some changes of wording or clarification.
- 3.5 At the time of writing this Statement of Common Ground also acknowledges the joint Statement to the Inspector prepared by the three developers / promoters in respect of Matter 3 Housing.

4. Areas of Common Ground - General Points

- 4.1 The parties agree that the WDLP is positively planning for housing growth. The parties support the major expansion of Princes Risborough. The direction of growth of the town and the extent of the expansion area is soundly based.
- 4.2 The parties agree that the sites are suitable, available, deliverable and developable, in accordance with paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The developers / promoters consider this can be realised with necessary amendments to the Princes Risborough policies to reflect their viability concerns. The Council does not agree with this position.
- 4.3 The parties agree that the main expansion area has the ability to deliver the general requirements set out in policy PR3 in accordance with the aims of the WDLP.
- 4.4 The parties are seeking to develop their sites for residential-led development. The PREA allocation is contained within the Housing Trajectory of the WDLP.

5. Detailed Capacity and Delivery Plans

- 5.1 The Council and the developer's / promoters agree to work positively together in the preparation of more detailed guidance for the PREA.
- 5.2 All parties note that WDC has gained in-principle approval for the use of CPO powers where necessary to unblock delivery.

6. Infrastructure and Phasing

- 6.1 The parties agree that the PREA requires major new road infrastructure in the form of a relief road through the expansion area as a complete alternative to the existing A4010 through Princes Risborough to enable the full capacity of the allocation to be realised. It is agreed that developer contributions will be required, in addition to Housing Infrastructure Funding, to make a fair contribution, including on-site provision and contributions towards off-site provision. The payments of infrastructure contributions may need to be phased in order to take account of upfront infrastructure costs.
- 6.2 All parties agree that the preferred indicative route option as set out in the Plan passes the test of deliverability, whereas there are considerable issues of deliverability against the other options tested by WDC in the development of the WDLP.
- 6.3 All parties agree that it is possible for housing to be delivered alongside the phased implementation of the relief road, as key links and elements are

completed, subject to assessments as to acceptable performance of the road network in the interim.

- 6.4 It may be possible for some residential capacity to be released in the short term, prior to provision of the relief road, subject to demonstrating acceptable performance of the road network and agreeing transport mitigation acceptable to WDC and BCC.
- 6.5 All parties are committed to the delivery of all necessary infrastructure (including the road) through:
- On-site implementation
 - Proportionate contributions to off-site requirements
 - The Councils leading / coordinating the implementation of off-site elements
- 6.6 It is agreed that proposals for the development of the land parcels within the PREA should be designed in a non-prejudicial fashion, with roads up to the boundaries in order to ensure there are no ransom situations that could otherwise restrict delivery.

7. Affordable housing

- 7.1 All parties agree that the site should provide dwellings in a range of different sizes and tenures including a proportion of affordable housing.
- 7.2 It is noted that WDC has already agreed with the WDLP EiP Inspector to introduce a mechanism into DM22 for the reversion of self-build plots to the developer under certain conditions.

8. Surface Water Flood Risk and Drainage

- 8.1 The development will incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff generated by the development. A surface water drainage strategy will control surface water runoff rates to better than greenfield rates. The surface water drainage strategy will take account of and be informed by local conditions such as existing surface water flood risk, groundwater levels (particularly seasonal variation) and infiltration potential on-site.

9. Viability and Deliverability

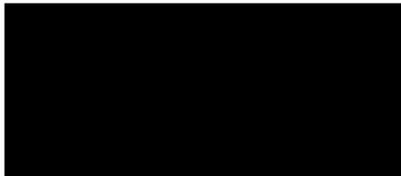
- 9.1 Although there is difference between the parties on the exact assumptions used in the viability study, and the scale and scope of obligations, all parties agree that each site within the PREA should contribute towards infrastructure. This will be informed by the Council's Capacity and Delivery Plan (currently in preparation) and will take account of contractual requirements, market conditions and viability. All parties will work together to achieve this.
- 9.2 At present, the Council is assuming a realistic trajectory based on the Wessex Deliverability study, which is the basis from which the Capacity and Delivery Plan will develop more detailed phasing proposals. However, the Council would not prevent development happening earlier if it can be demonstrated that it is achievable against the policy aims of the Plan.
- 9.3 It is agreed that the infrastructure contributions generated by the PREA should be based upon each phase making its pro rata contribution based upon a fair apportionment of net developable areas across the allocation, or similar mechanism.
- 9.4 The developers / promoters raise some concern about viability assumptions made in respect of delivery at Princes Risborough and some DM policy requirements, though these are not considered necessarily insurmountable in respect of the overall soundness of the Plan subject to viability testing.
- 9.5 All parties agree to support the development of an approach to establishing proportionate contributions across the expansion area.
- 9.6 WDC has been awarded forward funding in the form of a £12M allocation from the Housing Infrastructure Fund and is actively pursuing the development of key elements of the relief road to connect the southern end of the PREA into the main road network. All parties acknowledge that this is a positive move in enhancing the prospect of delivery at Princes Risborough and will ease issues of cash flow.

Signed

On behalf of Wycombe District Council



On behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council



Cllr Bill Chapple

On behalf of Persimmon Homes

Robert Stockford – Planning Manager



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On behalf of Taylor Wimpey



Jonathan Pillow – Strategic Projects Manager

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On behalf of Wates Developments



Alison Walker - Senior Land & Planning Manager

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Date:

04.09.18

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