Gladman Developments Ltd

Matter 5 Hearing Statement

Chesterfield Local Plan Examination

Proposed Site Allocations – Housing Sites and Strategic Sites

September 2019
Issue 1: Whether the proposed housing allocations will deliver sustainable housing development to meet identified needs. (Policy LP4 and SS policies)

a) Baseline evidence

5.1 The Housing Topic Paper (TP1) refers to the Housing Land Supply Statement (April 2019). Could a copy of these please be provided? Appendix 3 of the TP1 list a number of site statements: could copies of these please be provided to the examination?

1. Whilst this question is directed towards the Council, Gladman would welcome the decision to publish these documents so that participants are able to fully understand what has been agreed in these site statements and how these effect the Council’s housing land supply. Gladman reserve the right to make comments on these documents when they are available on the examination library.

b) Soundness of Policy LP4

5.2 With reference to Policy LP4 criterion a), to ensure the policy is effective and clear, should ‘built up area’ be defined?

2. Gladman consider that Policy LP4 would benefit from additional clarification in order to define the built-up area which will allow for the Policy to be applied consistently through the development management process. However, it is presumed that the built-up area is land within the existing urban edge of settlements within the borough. If this is the case, then Gladman consider additional flexibility should be included within the Policy and this is discussed in response to 5.3 below.

5.3 The last paragraph of Policy LP4 sets out what would be required of proposed residential development should the Council be unable to demonstrate a five-year housing supply. Would this approach ensure the policy is effective and consistent with paragraph 11 of the NPPF?

3. The last paragraph of Policy LP4 states that where the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable sites planning permission for new residential development outside the built-up area will be permitted in exception to the above criteria where it can demonstrate that it accords with the strategy of concentration and regeneration as set out in policies LP1 and LP2.
4. Gladman does not consider the approach to be an effective response to the undersupply of housing nor is it consistent with the requirements of paragraph 11d of the NPPF. If it becomes apparent that the Council is not able to demonstrate a robust five-year housing land supply all this will do is continue with a spatial strategy that is already failing and is therefore not considered an effective response to ensuring housing needs are met in full.

5. Gladman consider that flexibility must be provided which allows for a positive consideration of sustainable development opportunities adjacent to the built-up area at any time that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. There are a number of examples where Inspectors have taken the decision to modify such policies to ensure that at any point in time that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply that sites adjacent to the built-up area will be permitted. It is imperative that flexibility is built into the above policy and which is not reliant on a spatial strategy which has significant potential to fail.

c) Soundness of Sites H1-H36 presented in Table 4

5.4 In the context of the constraints and mitigation measures identified within the evidence base, are each of the housing allocations in Table 4 of the Plan soundly based, viable and deliverable in accordance with the proposed housing trajectory (See TP1 appendix B) and the site capacities as anticipated? Where relevant, an update on the planning status of sites should be provided.

6. Table 4 of the Plan identifies each housing allocation contained in the Plan. However, it is unclear how these sites have been considered and whether they will come forward in accordance with the proposed trajectory in accordance with TP1 appendix B. The Council’s housing trajectory is based on a prediction of expected delivery rates for each of the proposed sites, but the assumptions appear to be generic.

7. To support the Government’s continued objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, the Plan will need to be supported by a sufficient amount and variety of suitable sites that can come forward where they are needed to ensure that needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. Notwithstanding the comments made in relation to the housing requirement, it is important that the Plan will need to be flexible and ensure that it identifies a wide range of sites, site sizes and locations to provide for all aspects of the housebuilding industry to deliver identified

1 See Gladman’s Regulation 19 consultation response – paragraphs 4.2.8 and 4.4.3
housing needs. It is concerning that a number of strategic/non-strategic housing sites identified are located on PDL and/or require large improvements to existing infrastructure which might affect the viability of schemes and their anticipated delivery. Indeed, Gladman reiterate the fact that a number of key factors can affect the delivery of housing schemes such as:

- Land assembly and associated promotion and option agreements.
- The agreement of collaboration and equalisation agreements.
- Periods associated with the exercising of option agreements.
- The requirement for Environmental Statements at the planning application stage resulting in the involvement of third-party consultees (such as Highways England and Natural England).
- The complexity of s106 agreements where a significant number of service providers and infrastructure bodies are involved. Furthermore, multiple land ownership within strategic sites will result in the need for agreement between and sign off from multiple agents and solicitors which can take a significant length of time to achieve.
- The need for enabling infrastructure works, which are often complex and require completion before initial dwellings can be constructed and occupied.
- The need to address land contamination and undertake land reclamation works.
- Developers and builders requiring time at each stage to secure the necessary board level agreements and share-holder approvals to support any large capital expenditure. It is not always realistic to assume that a number of aspects within the lead in period can be progressed in parallel.

8. Accordingly, the Council should seek to identify additional housing land opportunities which can come forward which will increase housing land supply to support those identified sites in table 4 and the Strategic Sites (SS) sites to offer additional contingency in the Council’s supply of housing land. Furthermore, Gladman consider that an update on the planning status of these sites should be provided in order to obtain a greater understanding of how these sites have been considered, what infrastructure requirements are required and whether these sites are deliverable.

9. Gladman consider that additional allocations are required to ensure that the Council has a flexible and responsive supply of housing land available at all times during the plan period. Gladman consider our land interests at land south of Bamford Road, Inkersall Green and land
at Newbridge Drive, Brimington should be considered for potential allocation and retested through a revised Sustainability Appraisal and Site Assessment process.

5.7 Are there any proposed housing allocations in Table 4 that require specific policy to address site-related issues? Particularly larger sites, constrained sites or sites in multiple ownerships? Is the approach in Table 4 consistent with the PPG 61-002-20190315 which requires when plans are allocating land that “...sufficient detail should be given to provide clarity to developers, local communities and other interested parties about the nature and scale of development.” Should Table 4 set out the anticipated rate of development for these sites to illustrate their contribution to the housing trajectory?

10. See response to 5.4 above.

D. Soundness of housing provision at Sites SS1-SS7

5.8. In the context of the constraints, mitigation measures and infrastructure requirements identified within the evidence base, are each of the SS allocations soundly based, viable, and deliverable in accordance with the proposed housing trajectory (See TP1 appendix B) and the site capacities as anticipated?

11. See response to 5.4 above.