

Supplementary Input to the DPD Examination Hearing

Site SR011 – Land Off Wham Lane

Note to Ms Kezia Henderson, Forward Planning Dept, South Ribble Borough Council

The Inspector requested that we meet with the Council to discuss the additional information raised in the p.m. session of the Matters 3 Examination held on Wed 6 March 2013. On behalf of the Council you have asked that we document this information first, enabling you to consider the points. It is probable that we will wish to meet after that, to establish whatever common ground is possible. Please therefore take this E mail as our input to that process.

The areas to discuss revolve around the issue and importance of the Plan's delivery of 'Affordable Housing'. The Council's view appears to be that however good our site proposal is, it must be rejected on the grounds that national Green Belt policy and Council Core Strategy discourage the reclassification of a Green Belt site and that it is not necessary to do so. Notwithstanding this, the Council has confirmed that the Sustainability Assessment for Site SR011 shows a good score in many areas and a 'Band B' rating overall.

We have noted throughout, the importance that is attached nationally and in the Council's Core Strategy Document to achieving increased levels of affordable housing, particularly in Rural areas – 35% being stated as a target in villages. Meanwhile, 'The South Ribble Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2012' (Document CD4.21 in the South Ribble electronic library for these Hearings Part 2 Section 4) gives the actuality as being much less – only 11 affordable dwellings were reported as being built during the year Mar 2011- Mar 2012. The Plan Document (SRSD001) gives no indication of the Affordable Housing 'commitment' within the schemes which are being taken forward. **You have advised that this is because such decisions are taken process with the developers, later in the planning cycle. (c.f. quote in red on following page).** For such an important issue this seems vague and uncertain.

By contrast we are putting forward a scheme that specifically focuses on this important aspect as well as considerations for the elderly who wish to 'migrate' into smaller properties in their own communities, which is also high profile in the Core Strategy.

You mentioned the site at Spinney Close in New Longton as being that which would provide such accommodation for New Longton itself, presumably to be discussed later in determining the proportion of affordable housing (as mentioned above). We pointed out, that this site would contribute only an estimated incremental **1%** of property in New Longton for that purpose (being approx. 0.6ha).

We consider this to be far too small for New Longton especially if only a portion of it is so designated. It does not seem capable of satisfying the targets given in the Core Strategy, or the perceived needs of the village. For these reasons we continue to feel that The Plan is unsound in not demonstrably meeting the objectives of the Core Strategy.

We feel that we have shown that the Council has it within its powers to address this issue by considering the benefits of our scheme to outweigh the normal constraints applied by the classification as Green Belt.

We are doing this by reference to the 'Central Lancashire Supplementary Planning Document 1. Affordable Housing Final Version: October 2012' (SRE003). This document is an 'Evidence Document' contained in the electronic library. Two quotes are particularly pertinent:

"Affordable housing requirements should be assessed at the plan-making stage, where possible, and kept under review" - Page 3 Section B: Planning Policy – National Policy – Para 6 – Bullet 7

"Local Planning Authorities should regard providing limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan as appropriate development in Green Belt" – Page 3 Section B: Planning Policy – National Policy – Para 6 – Bullet 4

We feel that we are unique in offering to promote a deliverable scheme with huge social benefit. To recap, we are seeking inclusion of our site within the plan as land for 'Village Development'. Our objective is to create a window of opportunity, within the Council's Development Plan timespan, to develop and, if appropriate, take forward the developed proposals. We are keen to ensure that the community of **New Longton** is not frozen out of this opportunity through to the year 2026 and beyond.

We also feel that, for reasons given above, the Council has it within its powers to pursue this idea, so meeting national and local objectives that are unlikely to be met otherwise.

We therefore still feel that the as-published plan is unsound and ask the Council to reconsider its position based on our submission.

As a point of information, we did note that in responding to the Inspector, your colleague said that our first submission was for a "Residential" development only. You will recall that prior to the formal Examination we were able to demonstrate to you and Ms Zoe Harding that our first submission in 2007 (our Reference 7) was for a mixed development (copy document provided to you at the time). We deliberately avoided contradicting her on this in the meeting but feel that it did suggest that we had not been consistent in our approach over time.

This may not be relevant to the outcome of the examination but we really do feel that it should be made clear to the Inspector that we have, in fact, been consistent throughout.

We thank you for your assistance in this matter.



Geoffrey Dawson