

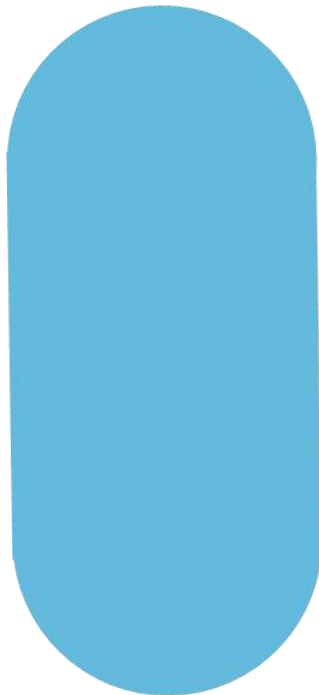
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Examination

Matter 13 – Strengthening Communities

Hearing Statement

Hallam Land Management Limited & Persimmon Homes

Respondent Reference: 1115486





This Hearing Statement is submitted on behalf of Hallam Land Management and Persimmon Homes (ref: 1115486) in respect of their interest in Land West of Peterborough Road, Farcet. Representations submitted to the Proposed Submission Local Plan, sets out their case in full.

**Community planning proposals – Policy LP 29**

**20) Is it justified to allow community based development proposals as an exception to other policies?**

1. Yes, it is justified in the absence of sufficient allocations in the rural area that would deliver the distribution strategy (as submitted in the Matter 3 Statement) to allow for community based development proposals that could include an element of housing.
2. Given the settlement pattern of the District and how community based development typically comes forward, the exception based approach is an appropriate strategy. These could arise unexpectedly and vary in terms of requirements; therefore a broad policy is reasonable.
3. Policy LP 29 has to be read in conjunction with the Council's definition of the built up area, Countryside policy and relevant Development Strategy policies. Given their overall tightly defined nature it is unlikely that all community planning proposals could be located within the built up area of any given settlement. Therefore, without Policy LP 29 in place it could prevent legitimate community planning proposals and it is even more likely that the distribution strategy will not be delivered.

**21) Would the policy allow for housing as enabling development on sites where it would not otherwise be permitted? If so, is this justified?**

4. LP 29 provides the basis for local communities to address potential civic requirements and for market housing to help fund such needs. It is perfectly legitimate for local communities to use development as a lever to help deliver community benefits.
5. The Local Plan, as drafted, is reliant on the application of LP 29 in order to meet its distribution strategy. In addition, the policy requires that the development is of an appropriate scale and the effect on the character of the settlement is addressed. Hence, the Plan anticipates housing development outside of the built-up-area and still requires it to be sustainable. Read in this way, the policy approach is not an exception, but a specific part of the Council's strategy for growth. Albeit, with a significant degree of uncertainty (which is why it would be preferable to make additional allocations).



**22) Is the overall policy approach justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**

6. Whilst there is no in principle objection to a policy to help deliver community based development proposals, there are number of modifications to the policy and supporting text as set out below.
7. Criterion c. of LP 29 is not effective. The application of the policy as drafted could result in frustrating local communities if the local need is not of a scale that would enable the delivery of the community benefits that the policy seeks to deliver.
8. Criterion c. of LP 29 is also not consistent with national policy in that it is not clear how a decision maker should react to a development proposal (Para. 154) as the policy does not set out how local need should either be defined or assessed.
9. LP 29 could also be strengthened by explicitly supporting appropriate proposals that accord with unmet community needs identified in the Council's evidence base, such as those found in the Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21. For example, this could then mean that a community based development proposal for the provision of additional sporting facilities in Farcet and Yaxley (of which there is a deficit) would explicitly be given weight.

Word Count: 625