

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Examination

Statement for Matter 12: The Supply and Delivery of Housing Land

On behalf of Crest Nicholson Regeneration and
the Defence Infrastructure Organisation

ID: 898485

- 1.1. This Pre-Hearing Statement has been prepared by Savills (UK) Limited on behalf of Crest Nicholson Regeneration and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO). In partnership with the DIO, Crest Nicholson are promoting the opportunity for a new garden village at the Airfield and are seeking the allocation of 'Phase 1' for approximately 1,000 units in this emerging Local Plan.

5) How has flexibility been provided in terms of the supply of housing? Are there other potential sources of supply not specifically identified? Can this be quantified?

- 1.2. As noted in our response to Matter 4, it is not considered that the Council has appropriately assessed its objectively assessed housing need, and consequently additional housing sites should be identified to meet this need.
- 1.3. The Council has identified provision for approximately 22,500 homes in the Plan. Given the Council's persistent under delivery of housing, it is considered that further sites should be allocated to ensure the delivery of a five year supply of housing throughout the plan period and flexibility should some sites not come forward within the proposed timeframe.
- 1.4. One such site is Wyton Airfield. Overall, this site has capacity to deliver 4,500 dwellings, employment land, retail floorspace and other local services. The site was identified in earlier drafts of the Plan as a Strategic Expansion Location, however, it was removed in light of the findings of the Strategic Transport Study which concluded the site could not come forward without significant upgrades to road infrastructure.
- 1.5. Paragraph 4.24 of the Plan states "*the road infrastructure requirements to serve redevelopment of Wyton Airfield and the current funding requirements for these in particular, are not deliverable at this time.*" (Savills underlining added). The clear implication of this statement to us is that the Council believes the road infrastructure requirements to serve redevelopment of the Airfield are capable of being deliverable in the future and this is clearly of particular note.
- 1.6. Paragraph 4.22 then recognises the contribution that redevelopment of the Airfield can make to future housing needs and this recognition is particularly welcomed. In this plan period, Crest Nicholson and the DIO are seeking the allocation of Phase 1 which can deliver a new community of Around 1,000 homes, including affordable homes and MoD housing.
- 1.7. We are of the view that the remainder of the site should be safeguarded for development, within this plan period and beyond, in the event that the road infrastructure constraints enabling development beyond 1,000 units are resolved. This will provide for a more flexible plan, providing the Council with a further option to meet housing and employment needs.

6) Has there been a persistent under delivery of housing? In terms of a buffer for a five year supply of housing sites, should this be 5% or 20% in relation to para 47 of the NPPF?

- 1.8. Yes. Deliverability has significantly worsened since 2012 and this was echoed by the Inspector for Luck's Lane, Buckden (appeal reference APP/H0520/W/16/315161) who noted the housing supply target had only been met once since 2011/12, and "*has been missed by some margin subsequently*".
- 1.9. NPPF Paragraph 47 states: *Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20%.*"

7) How should the shortfall in delivery since 2011 be dealt with?

- 1.10. This shortfall in delivery should be met in the next five years of the plan to ensure choice and competition in the market and to help meet market and affordable housing needs in the immediate future. This is in accordance with Paragraph 3-035 of the NPPG which states "*local planning authorities should aim to deal with any undersupply within the first five years of the plan period where possible.*"
- 1.11. The District is not constrained by Green Belt or any other landscape designations which would justify a staggered or phased housing requirement, with a lower number of houses being delivered early in the plan period.
- 1.12. Whilst we support in principle a strategy which seeks to deliver a high proportion of new houses in strategic growth locations, it is considered more strategic sites (such as Phase 1 Wyton Airfield) should be identified in the Plan to ensure much needed homes and affordable are delivered as soon as possible and continue to be delivered throughout the plan period.

10) Is there a case for a staggered or phased housing requirement with a lower figure in the early years of the plan period to take account of the larger strategic allocations? If so, what would be an appropriate phasing?

- 1.13. No. As noted above, the District is not constrained by Green Belt or any other landscape designations which would justify a staggered or phased housing requirement, with a lower number of houses being delivered early in the plan period.
- 1.14. If there are concerns that any of the allocated sites will not deliver the required number of homes within the first five years of the Plan, then additional sites which are available for development should be identified. Phase 1 Wyton Airfield is one such site. As noted in our response to Matter 3 and to the Regulation 19 Local Plan, it is anticipated that Phase 1 Wyton Airfield can deliver around 1,000 homes including affordable homes and MoD housing.
- 1.15. It is anticipated within five years following the grant of planning permission, the site could deliver in the region of 550 homes, a new primary school and neighbourhood centre. This site can be delivered without significant upgrades to existing infrastructure thus delaying commencement of the building of new homes.
- 1.16. Phase 1 Wyton Airfield will be a self-sufficient garden village that can stand alone even if no further development comes forward. A Phase 1 will provide much needed amenities for the existing residents and military employees making the existing community more sustainable, as well as making the area better primed for the Airbase growth.