

Gladman Developments Ltd
Matter 6 Hearing Statement
Mansfield District Local Plan
Examination

Housing Allocations and Five-Year Supply



April 2019

Question 1: Is the site selection process for the housing allocations soundly based, including sustainability appraisal and the testing of reasonable alternatives? Is the site selection methodology based on an appropriate set of criteria?

- 1.1 The Council has produced a comparative assessment of sites through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal and the site selection methodology is based on an appropriate set of criteria.
- 1.2 The Site Selection Technical Paper further assessed the sites on the edge of settlements against seven criteria and considered any comments made through consultation on the Local Plan. It is stated that a balanced judgement has been taken with a limited degree of harm subject to mitigation deemed acceptable to avoid significant impacts or to achieve substantial public benefits.
- 1.3 It is unclear from the Summary of Sites (HE2) for which reasons each specific site has been excluded at the Stage 1 Assessment based on the list of criteria from the HELAA Final Methodology Report.
- 1.4 Sites which do not have a red classification from the Stage 2 Assessment of available, suitable or achievable form reasonable alternatives which could be appropriate to take forward as allocations through the Local Plan.

Question 2: Are the reasons for selecting allocated sites and rejecting others clearly set out and justified?

- 2.1 Site 67 has been assessed and is discounted as part of a larger grouping of sites through the Site Selection Technical Paper. No specific reason is given as why the Site has been considered as part of a larger group of sites especially considering that it is being promoted separately and can be developed sustainably without relying on these wider sites.
- 2.2 Gladman consider that Site 67 has been discounted for issues which do not apply to the Site when considered on its own merits. The Sustainability Appraisal Report (August 2018) outlines that 'Site Cluster 2 – Peafield Lane' has been discounted for its impact on the A60 corridor, the number of access points from Peafield Lane, limited evidence of delivery, and more limited potential to connect to existing green infrastructure.
- 2.3 Gladman disagree with the relevance of these assertions for Site Cluster 2 Peafield Lane to Site 67. The site is currently subject to a planning application which is awaiting determination (see application reference 2018/0777/OUT). The application illustrates Gladman's intention to secure the development of the Site in the short term. The application is supported by a detailed range evidence and technical studies illustrating the Site's sustainability and suitability for development.
- 2.4 Taking this information into account, it is further clear that development of Site 67 would not impact heavily on the A60. Its development requires only a single point of access off Peafield Lane and therefore its development would not result in multiple access points. The Site benefits from good access to local services and facilities. There is potential to access Peafield Park and the Maun Valley from

- the Site. Clearly therefore the Site is not unsuitable for development under the reasons set out through the Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- 2.5 Gladman raise issue with the scoring for Site Reference 67 site at Peafield Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse in the Sustainability Appraisal. The Sustainability Appraisal states that Site Reference 67 will have a Negative Effect on SA2 (Health), SA6 (Biodiversity: Designated Sites), SA7 (Heritage and Landscape), SA8 (Soil) and SA9 (Waste).
- 2.6 Gladman consider that the development of the site responds positively to Sustainability Appraisal objectives 1 with the provision of both market and affordable housing. The development would provide publicly accessible open space with potential connections to existing open space and green infrastructure responding positively to SA Objectives 2 and 3. Net biodiversity gains within the development is considered to meet SA Objective 6. The Site holds a sustainable location and therefore responds positively to SA Objective 11.
- 2.7 Additionally, consultation responses received in response to the current planning application confirm no objection to the proposed development on grounds of heritage (SA Objective 7) or flooding/drainage (SA Objective 8). The response received to application in relation to greenspace confirms that the proposals would satisfactorily address open space and green infrastructure requirements (SA Objective 3). It continues outlining that on-site open space and green links to the Maun Valley will bring positive health benefits for future residents (SA Objective 2), whilst the proposed links to the existing Peafield Park will help to diffuse any recreational impact on locally designated sites (SA Objective 6). Further, it has been confirmed that mitigation provided as part of the proposed development softens the impacts and reinforces landscape features (SA Objective 7) The site, therefore, should be assessed to have a Positive effect on the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.
- 2.8 It clear is that Site 67 represents a sustainable option for locating residential development in Mansfield Woodhouse which if allocated would boost housing land supply and aid housing delivery in the District. Gladman submit that the site is suitable, achievable and available now.

Question 3: Are the following assumptions for residential development set out in the Housing Land Availability Assessment and Policy Assessment (HE1) appropriate and based on robust evidence?

- **Gross to net developable areas for residential development (Table 5.5);**
 - **Density of 35 dwellings per net developable hectare.**
- 3.1 The Council state that reductions in developable area have been based on a high-level estimate which can be later refined as a site progresses through the planning system. A gross to net development ratio is then applied taking into account a review of past planning applications and developer consultations and land allowances which may be required for Sustainable Urban drainage and green infrastructure.
- 3.2 Appendix E of the HELAA includes a review of past density in the District based on planning applications determined over the previous five year. The Council disregarded the option of adopting a

greenfield and brownfield density variation and a Mansfield and Market Warsop variation despite the averages for greenfield sites being generally lower and considerably lower for greenfield sites in Market Warsop. Ignoring this evidence is considered to be inappropriate and may mean that site capacity is overestimated on some sites identified in these areas.

Question 12: Is the development proposed on the sites listed in Policy H1 deliverable in the timescales envisaged in the updated housing trajectory in document H2? Are the assumptions for start dates and rates of delivery on each site appropriate and justified?

- 4.1 There is limited evidence available which illustrates that timescales set out within the housing trajectory¹ are realistic. It is unclear whether the trajectory has been informed by information provided by site promoters, takes account of site-specific issues, or reflects the requirements/timescales of key infrastructure. It is therefore unclear on what basis the housing trajectory has been arrived at.
- 4.2 The Council provide an update on progress made on each site identified in Policies H1 and H2 of the Local Plan in its Local Plan Baseline Monitoring Report². In this report the Council conclude that the majority of these sites remain on-target to be developed in accordance with the timescales set out in the housing trajectory. However very little detail is provided as part of this update to support these conclusions.
- 4.3 Of the proposed allocated sites, Council monitoring shows (at the reported baseline) that there is a total of 15 allocated sites which have yet to be promoted through a planning application. No further information is provided setting out what communication has been made with the various site promoters or landowners connected to each of these sites, or what evidence there is to demonstrate their deliverability in accordance with the timescales set out in the housing trajectory. Reflecting on this, Gladman do not consider that sufficient evidence is available to illustrate that the delivery of these sites will occur as highlighted with potential implications for the Council's short- and long-term supply position.
- 4.4 Gladman's concerns regarding the lead-in and delivery rates of identified sites are not eased by the Council's past record of housing delivery. Examining the Council's monitoring data³, it is clear that long lead-in times are often experienced for Sites promoted in the District before completions are recorded on site. It is further clear that the average rate of delivery experienced at major development sites in the District is far lower than is anticipated for the remaining plan period through the housing trajectory. Gladman do not consider that the Council's approach to the housing trajectory moving forwards over the plan period takes account of previous experience of housing delivery in the District.

¹ As set out in the Housing Technical Paper Addendum 2018.

² Examination Document AMR4

³ As provided by the Council's Housing Monitoring Reports 2012-2018.

Question 16: Does the proposed supply of 8597 dwellings set out in Table 5.1 of the plan against a requirement of 6500 dwelling incorporate a sufficient 'buffer' to allow for non-delivery as well as providing choice and flexibility of housing land:

- 5.1 Gladman believe that planning for flexibility within the supply is a necessity to secure the Plan's deliverability and overall soundness. Planning for flexibility in the Local Plan is prudent as it recognises that not all sources of supply will be delivered as anticipated, and that conditions experienced now may change in later years of the plan period. Identifying additional sources of supply now provides for a positively prepared Local Plan, allowing these matters to be addressed upfront before a backlog can arise and the number of completions recorded within the District drops.
- 5.2 The quoted supply of 8597 dwellings includes two SUEs which the Council itself does not consider deliverable within the plan period owing to issues of viability. Taking this into account Gladman consider it prudent for the contribution made by these SUEs is removed from the supply altogether. The effect of this is to reduce the supply provided by the Local Plan to 7,638 dwellings in the plan period providing a buffer of 17.5% against the proposed housing requirement.
- 5.3 The quoted supply assumes 100% delivery of committed development. To expect the full delivery of this supply is unrealistic as not all of the development already permitted will be delivered as intended for varying reasons. There is an absence of evidence produced at a local level which sets out what the local lapse rate is, however examining previous housing monitoring there is a history of lapsed planning permissions on major sites. Typically, around 80% of consents will be developed as anticipated. It is therefore important that sufficient flexibility is built into the Local Plan to account for this and ensure full delivery.
- 5.4 As set out in our response to Question 12, there is a general absence of information provided by the Council which would support the outlined timescales for the delivery of committed and allocated sites as set out in the housing trajectory. In Gladman's view, the absence of such information, together with records of previous delivery in the District, means that there is a high risk that the timescales outlined will not be achieved, potentially resulting in reduced overall delivery.
- 5.5 As set out in our Matter 2 Hearing Statement, Gladman hold concerns about the concentration of growth along the MARR. Adoption of the spatial strategy as proposed will concentrate a high proportion of growth required over the remaining plan period to relatively a small part of the District where housing delivery in recent years has been limited. The Council is therefore reliant on meeting a large proportion of its housing requirement in an area where delivery on the scale required by the Local Plan is untested. This substantially increases the potential that the Local Plan may fail.
- 5.6 Gladman is also concerned by the impact that the concentration of development to a small geographical area might have on delivery rates. The proposed strategy increases the likelihood of dampened delivery rates because of increased local competition, reduced choice in the market, and

limited range of products available to buyers, all of which might otherwise help keep supply levels more buoyant.

- 5.7 To address the above concerns Gladman consider that further allocations are necessary in the wider District to increase flexibility and enhance market choice.

Question 17: Does past delivery and/or the Housing Delivery Test results have any implications for the appropriate buffer to be added to the five-year supply?

- 6.1 The Local Plan has been submitted within the transitional period and as such is subject to the policies of the 2012 NPPF. Paragraph 47 of the 2012 NPPF advises that where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20%.. to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.
- 6.2 Council monitoring data since 2013/14 illustrates that the identified OAN of 376 dwellings has been met only once over the five years of data available. This clearly reflects a recorded of persistent under delivery meaning that the application of a 20% buffer to the residual requirement would be justified.
- 6.3 It is however material to the examination that policies of the 2019 NPPF are applicable for decision making now and will govern how the five-year supply is calculated for the District following adoption of the Local Plan. It is therefore the policies of the 2019 NPPF that will be used to determine matters of supply through the implementation of the Local Plan and not the 2012 NPPF.
- 6.4 Paragraph 73 of the 2019 NPPF confirms the role that the Housing Delivery Test has in determining the buffer to be applied to the calculation of five-year supply. The first Housing Delivery Test results were issued by MHCLG in February 2019. This confirms that Mansfield is a 5% authority based on delivery over the previous three years. Therefore, whilst for the examination of the Local Plan the appropriate buffer to plan for in the calculation of five-year supply is 20%, this will automatically reduce to 5% at the adoption of the Local Plan.
- 6.5 Regardless of this position, Gladman consider that the Council should plan a deliverable supply⁴ sufficient to deliver 6 years of the housing requirement. Planning for a 6-year supply will in practice benefit the Council by ensuring that a robust supply position can be demonstrated and ensure housing delivery is maintained over the plan period.

⁴ Using the definition of the 2019 NPPF.

Question 18: What is the 5-year requirement for the relevant period on adoption of the Plan?

- 7.1 Gladman consider that the 5-year requirement for the Plan should be measured based on the OAN which according to existing (full) evidence is 376 dwellings per year.
- 7.2 Working to a base date of 31st March 2018, Council monitoring shows that since the start of the plan period in 2013/14 a total of 1,543 net dwellings have been completed in the District. This is 337 dwellings less than required for the same period to meet the OAN.
- 7.3 Gladman consider that the entirety of this shortfall should be met within the five-year period adopting Sedgefield approach given the absence of constraints to housing development in the District and in order to reflect the aims of the NPPF to boost significantly the supply of housing.
- 7.4 In line with Paragraph 47 it is then necessary to apply a 5 or 20% buffer to the five-year requirement to help increase housing land supply.
- 7.5 Based on the above, Gladman consider that the five-year requirement for Mansfield is between 2,328 dwellings or 466 dwellings per year and 2,660 dwellings or 532 dwellings per year⁵

Question 19: Is the approach to calculating the 5-year requirement set out in document H2 appropriate and consistent with national policy, in particular the deduction of 'oversupply' from the subsequent 5-year period?

- 8.1 Gladman consider the Council's approach conflicts with national planning policy. The NPPF sets a clear priority to secure the delivery of sustainable development. Capping development does not reflect this nor will it provide for a significant boost in housing land supply.
- 8.2 The deduction of oversupply from the future five-year requirement of the Plan also conflicts with the wording of Policy S2 of the Local Plan. Policy S2 clearly sets out that the housing requirement of the Local Plan is a minimum figure. However, the Council's approach to monitoring, as illustrated in document H2, would indicate that this being treated as a cap. To resolve this issue, Gladman believe that any oversupply, provided it is not disproportionate to the housing requirement, should not be deducted from future requirements.

⁵ $376 \times 5 = 1,880 + 377 = 2,217 \times 1.05 = 2,328$ or $2,217 \times 1.2 = 2,660$ (Base date 31st March 2018)

Question 20: Based on a requirement of 325 dwellings per year, would the plan help to ensure a 5-year supply of deliverable sites on adoption and over the plan period? Is there clear evidence to support the delivery of sites in the relevant 5-year period?

- 9.1 As set out previously Gladman hold concerns with the assumed timescales of the delivery for allocated and committed sites in the District. There is an absence of detailed evidence which illustrates that allocated sites remain on course for delivery as set out in the housing trajectory. Past delivery in the District illustrates that completion rates achieved locally are lower than expected in the housing trajectory.
- 9.2 Gladman consider that there is insufficient evidence provided by the Council to demonstrate that those allocations assumed to commence delivery in the next 5 years are deliverable as defined under the 2019 NPPF. Gladman also consider that there is insufficient evidence to support the inclusion of Sites benefitting from Permission in Principle to be included within the 5-year supply. Taking these concerns into account Gladman believe that the deliverable supply is lower than anticipated by the Council and consider that additional allocations should be made in wider parts of the District to boost supply.
- 9.3 Whilst Gladman doubt the deliverability of the Council's current housing land supply within the timescales currently envisaged, there is no reason why, with the adoption of an alternative spatial strategy that the Council cannot consistently demonstrate a 5-year supply, with increased delivery in response to a higher housing requirement.
- 9.4 To achieve this Gladman consider that there is need for further allocations to be identified on site unconstrained and sustainable sites located within the wider District, which will boost delivery by providing for broader market choice. The adoption of this approach will ensure that future delivery in the District is not dependent on the development of new housing in a relatively small geographical area where housing delivery has been more limited.