

Statement of Common Ground

Between

Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) and Bellway Homes / Miller Homes (B/M)

In respect of

The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-31

Date of agreement: 6 January ~~2016~~ 2017

1. This statement of common ground has been prepared in the context of the publication version of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (SBLP), which was placed on deposit for a six-week period ending 17 February 2016 and submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 22 July 2016.
2. The statement is intended to set out the position of the signing parties at the current time and will be kept up-to-date as SBC reaches key milestones in the preparation of its plan.
3. Bellway Homes / Miller Homes are the option holders of the North Stevenage site, allocated under Policy HO3 of the Local Plan. This statement covers those issues raised within their consultation response to SBC, as well as any additional issues relating to this site.

Principle of site allocation

4. B/M agree to the allocation of the North of Stevenage site within the Local Plan to provide approximately 800 new homes within a new neighbourhood. Both parties agree this provides a sustainable site for development, which is required to meet the Objectively Assessed Needs of the Borough. Both parties agree to a small element of retail being provided, alongside educational and healthcare facilities, subject to needs being evidenced.

Site specific issues

5. Both SBC and B/M agree that, although the site has potential to unlock development within North Hertfordshire (NHDC) and any masterplan should not preclude this, development of the site should be progressed as a standalone scheme and not as a cross-boundary application. The detailed Masterplan is, therefore, only required to cover the allocated site within the Borough boundary and must merely demonstrate that any adjoining development would not be frustrated by the proposed layout.

6. Both parties agree there will be a need to continue to work with both NHDC, and the landowners/developers of the adjoining site in the future, to ensure homes across the boundary on the adjacent site are successfully integrated into the urban fabric.
7. SBC and B/M agree that development on the part of the allocated site that lies within the conservation area will not give rise to substantial harm to the heritage assets within this area. It is agreed that, although there will be some harm, this is less than substantial harm and clearly outweighed by the need for new homes and a lack of alternative land sources within the Borough to meet this need.
8. SBC and B/M agree that the existing Right of Way running through the site is likely to require diversion in order to enable an appropriate site layout to be achieved. SBC will support this approach.
9. Both parties agree that the land directly adjacent to the North of Stevenage site (to the east) should be retained within the Green Belt and open space, in lieu of on-site provision within the development site. A Legal Agreement or land transfer will be used to secure this provision, the details of which will be agreed by the two parties during the pre-application stage.

Delivery of the site

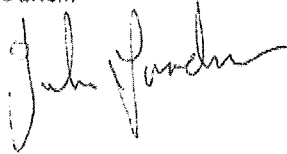
10. B/M confirm that they are in a position to bring this site forward for residential development and that the development of North of Stevenage (HO3) is viable and can be delivered within the Local Plan period.
11. SBC and B/M agree to continue to work together to ensure the delivery of this site.

Timescales for delivery

12. Formal pre-application discussions began in August 2016, and B/M confirm that an outline application is expected to be submitted in December 2016. B/M confirm that they are expecting to be able to deliver around 150 homes per year on this site, which will contribute to the 5 year housing land supply with first occupations from 2018 / 2019.

Signatories to this Statement of Common Ground:

For and on behalf of Stevenage Borough
Council:



Date: ^{6th January 2017}
~~December 2016~~

For and on behalf of Bellway / Miller Homes:



Date: ^{13th January 2017}
~~December 2016~~