

30th March 2017

**REVISED PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO POLICY HO2: STEVENAGE WEST
PREPARED ON BEHALF OF TAYLOR WIMPEY AND PERSIMMON HOMES**

Set out below and underlined are the proposed modifications to Policy HO2 and the supporting text that Taylor Wimpey and Persimmon Homes consider are necessary to ensure delivery of Stevenage West, which have been updated in response to the Hearing session relating to Policy HO2, to assist the Inspector. The proposed modifications seek to assist in the delivery housing on this much needed but complex site, through the phasing of development and the associated frontloading of the known infrastructure requirements.

We have incorporated all the further amendments proposed by SBC in their version of the revised wording relating to Policy HO2 (also set out below), all of which we agree, except in relation to when detailed development proposals can be submitted, which as expressed at the Examination, we consider should be prior to determination of the masterplan. This will enable delivery on site as quickly as possible, particularly given that the detailed design work would have been carried out in tandem with the masterplanning.

Our proposed modifications to the Supporting Text set out below and underlined, are a repeat of those changes previously sought as set out in our Stage 3 Matter 15 & 16 Hearing Statement. There have been some minor word changes, to reflect the Council's new proposed wording relating to phasing. However, as previously stated, our proposed modifications are considered imperative to the delivery of West Stevenage, given the past difficulties that have left the site undeveloped and the known access infrastructure requirements at Meadway in particular, that are required to enable a first phase of delivery. The proposed modifications to the supporting text of Policy HO2 will assist in the delivery of housing at West Stevenage.

We also still seek the clarification in the policy wording that the GP surgery can be provided on commercial terms, as it would be unviable to do otherwise.

Policy HO2: Stevenage West

Land at West Stevenage, as defined by the proposals map, is allocated for the development of approximately 1350 units.

A masterplan for the whole site will be required as part of any planning application. The masterplan must be approved prior to the determination of detailed development proposals for the site. [As discussed at the Hearing, the Inspector will consider this wording more fully]

Development proposals will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- a. The applicant can demonstrate the development can be expanded beyond the Borough boundary in the future, into safeguard land within North Hertfordshire;
- b. The development incorporates employment floorspace of 10,000m², in accordance with Policy EC1;
- c. Improvements to existing access routes across the A1(M), via Bessemer Drive and Meadway, are provided, which link effectively into existing road, cycleway and pedestrian networks;
- d. The scheme is designed to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport;
- e. An appropriate buffer to mitigate against noise impact from A1 (M) is included;
- f. At least 5% aspirational homes are provided in line with Policy HO9;
- g. Plots to accommodate at least 1% new homes are made available for self-build purposes;
- h. 30% affordable housing is provided in line with Policy HO7;

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- i. Provision for supported or sheltered housing is made in line with Policy HO10;
- j. A primary school is provided in line with the most up to date evidence of need;
- k. Local facilities to serve the community are incorporated, including a GP surgery, subject to demand and on a commercial basis;
- l. Sports facilities are provided on-site including, but not limited to:
 - I. A skate park or MUGA for children; and
 - II. Land to accommodate a new cricket facility;
- m. A full archaeological assessment is undertaken;
- n. A full flood risk assessment is undertaken;
- o. The scheme incorporates a network of green infrastructure, with emphasis on high quality landscaping within and around the development to reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding greenfield/Green belt land;
- p. Existing public rights of way retained and incorporated, where possible; and
- q. The impact of noise pollution from London Luton airport is mitigated

It is recognised that the site may be delivered by a number of different developers. In this case, any phase of development would be required to demonstrate that it would enable the delivery of the policy objectives for the development as a whole and those relevant to that phase, and enable an expanded scheme within North Hertfordshire District Council. Community facilities should be provided in a location that allows them to be expanded to meet the needs of the site as a whole.

Supporting Text Amendment

Para 9.14 - amend last sentence - 'The approval of a Masterplan will be required prior to the determination of detailed development proposals for the site'.

New 9.14a – The site may be brought forward for development on a phased basis. A framework masterplan will be required for the whole site, to be submitted with any planning application. Such an approach will enable early housing delivery in recognition of site constraints.

Para 9.18 - Sports facilities will also be required, in line with policy HC8. As part of this requirement, our evidence identifies a need for an additional cricket facility to be provided within the town, towards the end of the plan period. It recommends Stevenage West as the preferred location for this provision to be made. Subject to an up-to-date assessment of demand, the masterplan will be expected to show how this facility can be accommodated within the site. It is likely that additional (external) sources of funding will be required to deliver this facility. This will require further discussion at pre-application stage. In the event that no demand is shown for the proposed facility by an operator, equivalent quantitative sports pitch provision will be required in accordance with Policy HC8. A skate park / alternative youth facilities will also be required.

Para 9.21 - A small proportion of plots will be required to be made available for sale to people who want to build their own homes. This can be combined with the aspirational homes requirement, by reserving larger plots that meet both criteria. If self-build plots are not taken up by the public after being marketed for at least two years, we will allow these to revert to conventional build plots

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New paragraphs after Paragraph 9.21

Para 9.21a - The Council recognise that this key site has stalled in the past and would reiterate the importance of early delivery in meeting local needs and demands in the early plan period. The policy framework has sought to recognise this in the phased approach permitted which will work in conjunction with the flexibility provided by Policy HO7 Affordable Housing. It is fully recognised that the phasing of development will impact upon a fully policy compliant scheme within initial phases.

Para 9.21b - As with any large scale development, the first phase of development will have to deliver a disproportionate amount of up front infrastructure, particularly in relation to the Meadway access arrangements, which will further impact on the delivery of affordable housing and full policy compliance in the early stages of development.

Para 9.21c - In accordance with Policy HO7 Affordable Housing, any application that does not meet the policy requirements of Policy HO2 f-l and/or fails to meet other Local Plan Policies, including Policy SP8d Optional Technical Standards, must be accompanied by a financial appraisal, based on current costs and development values at the time of the application. All appraisals will be subject to scrutiny and review by the Council's Housing Team.

Para 9.21d – The development will not be required to provide for more than 30% affordable housing in any event.