

HUTCHINSONS

Planning & Development Consultants

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan - Single Issue Review Examination

Proposed Modifications Consultation

REPRESENTATION

On behalf of

Mrs W Day

August 2023

HUTCHINSONS

15 Castle Gardens, Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire. PE28 0JE

1 THE REPRESENTATION

- 1.1 We are instructed by Mrs W Day, who owns land at Northfield Road, Soham
- 1.2 The land comprises one of the “*broad locations*” indicated in the adopted 2015 Local Plan and a planning application relating to the land was submitted some time ago and remains outstanding. Development of the site will not only assist with housing supply, but its implementation will also provide a tangible highway benefit by eliminating the dangerous cross-roads junction where Northfield Road meets the A142 Soham bypass, which has recently been the scene of several very serious road traffic accidents.
- 1.3 Negotiations with officers of the Council have continued during consideration of the application and assurances have been given that the application will be recommended for approval, when it is brought to the Planning Committee for determination. The result of the additional report on transient bats will be submitted shortly and this constitutes the final issue to be resolved, apart from the finalisation of the terms of the s106 agreement.
- 1.4 Against this background, we have monitored the progress of the Single Issue Review, since it was first published, but felt it unnecessary to comment or request an appearance at the round-table sessions, because we were in agreement with the Council's approach.
- 1.5 Indeed, the way forward as set out by the Council in February 2023 makes specific reference as to how the Council will deal with the “*broad locations*” and it confirmed “*two of which, out of the five identified, have recently received planning permission for development. The supply from this source is, as anticipated, therefore coming forward in the later part of the Plan period. Therefore, whilst the locations are broadly identified and it is intended that the specific site boundaries will be identified through the next Local Plan review, in the meantime the principle of development coming forward on the Broad Areas is now established.*” (Paragraph 3.5.6)(Examination Document EX.LA11)
- 1.6 The Inspector did not query the Council's approach to the “broad locations” and the Council's statement (Examination Document EX.HS24.LA) contained no

further reference to them. We do not recall any discussion about these at the round-table session held on 28th March 2023.

- 1.7 However, Main Modification 3 (MM3) (Examination Document EX.LA12) suggests further changes to Paragraph 3.5.6, deleting the anticipation that supply from the “*broad locations*” would come forward in the later part of the Plan period and also the acceptance that “*the principle of development coming forward on the Broad Areas is now established.*”
- 1.8 Of course, the latest proposed changes to the SIR as set out in MM3 may not affect the favourable determination of our planning application, bearing in mind the clear highway benefits and previous assurances of a positive officer recommendation. However, the proposed removing of the anticipation that the remaining “*broad location*” sites would come forward in the later part of the Plan period indicates some doubt as to the Council’s present position and appears to suggest that those sites must await re-assessment in the next full review of the Local Plan (MM3 Paragraph 3.5.6).
- 1.9 There is no justification for such a seeming shift from the Council’s position as stated in its Statement for the Hearing Session of November 2022. In our opinion the “*broad locations*” remain a necessary option within the Plan period to ensure that the required housing delivery is maintained to support the five-year supply of housing land. That was the original intention of the 2015 adopted Plan and we see no reason to depart from that approach, bearing in mind the previous long-term difficulties encountered in housing delivery and the clear benefits of maintaining a “buffer” to the housing supply situation.
- 1.10 The principle of development coming forward on the “*broad locations*” has been established by means of a successful planning appeal and the grant of planning permissions and that confirmation and clarification should remain in the SIR.

2 THE CHANGES SUGGESTED

- 2.1 We propose that the wording in Paragraph 3.5.6 indicated by the Council in November 2022 be retained, i.e. *“the supply from this source is, as anticipated, therefore coming forward in the later part of the Plan period”* and, later in that paragraph *“in the meantime the principle of development coming forward on the Broad Areas is now established.”*