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Matter 7d
Proposed Housing Site Allocations
Growth Villages and Hockley Heath

H38 – North of Southam Road
Issue

Whether the proposed housing site allocations at the Growth Villages and Hockley Heath are justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

August 2016

Policies DS11 and DS NEW3

NAME OF SITE: H38 – North of Southam Road

1) What is the current planning status of the site?

- a) Planning permission was granted for the construction of up to 60 market and affordable dwellings in 2014 (application number W/14/0322). Since that date, applications have related to reserved matters for this development.
- b) The most recently approved application for reserved matters was granted in August 2015 (W/15/1293).

2) How does it fit within the overall spatial strategy?

- a) The site lies outside the green belt and within a growth village envelope. It is in accordance with Policy DS4 (b), being in a sustainable location on the edge of a settlement and within reach of services and facilities.

3) In addition to housing provision, are there other benefits that the proposed development would bring?

- a) The site is being brought forward to provide a range of house types and sizes and includes 40% affordable housing.
- b) Open space is provided as is landscaping and additional tree planting.
- c) A children's play area is proposed within the open space.
- d) The site is in a sustainable location with access to public transport, local facilities and easy access to the strategic road network.
- e) The proposed development provides new amenity spaces for the existing and new community whilst improving public access across the site and to the wider pedestrian network through the creation of a footway link.

4) What are the potential adverse impacts of developing the site? How could they be mitigated?

- a) Adverse impacts have been addressed through the consideration of the planning application. They included:
 - i) Loss of agricultural land (Grade 3); the provision of additional housing and the associated benefits were felt to outweigh the loss of agricultural land in this instance.

- ii) Impact on area of landscape value; the revised landscape assessment for Radford Semele has indicated that the site was slightly less sensitive to housing development than some other areas. This is mainly due to the smaller and more screened field patterns in this location compared to the more open landscape on the south of Southam Road (from Village Sites Appraisal Matrix 2016; V19PM).

5) Is the scale of development proposed compatible with the capacity of the village to accommodate further growth in terms of its character and appearance, the level of services and existing infrastructure?

- a) The site is within range of a number of services and facilities, including a primary school (approx. 700m from the centre of the site), pre-school/nursery (600m), convenience food store and off license (340m), post office (400m), public house (480m), community centre (500m), community hall (600m) and a hairdresser (340m). In addition there are two churches within the settlement. The site is well located to take advantage of all of these services and facilities, which are accessible on foot.
- b) The application for reserved matters that was approved last year included the following statement from Radford Semele Parish Council,
 - 1) *Site No.3 has many points in its favour*
 - 2) *A new road access to / from Southam Road would provide exclusive access to the site.*
 - 3) *It is in a part of the village where the road can be modified without impact on traffic in other parts of the village.*
 - 4) *The impact on neighbouring properties is reduced to a few residents.*
 - 5) *Access to the village shop, post office and community hall is nearer than from this site than from alternative sites.*
 - 6) *The retention of trees bordering Southam Road would quickly integrate the site as an established part of the village.*
 - 7) *Few people would notice the visual impact in this location.*
 - 8) *The 30mph speed restriction needs to be extended.*
 - 9) *The roadside footpath to Lewis Road can be easily improved.*
 - 10) *The land has not been cultivated, nor is it not suitable for cultivation.*
 - 11) *The site has received a high level of support for its development in the survey of residents' opinions.*

6) What are the infrastructure requirements / costs and are there physical or other constraints to development? How would these be addressed?

- a) Infrastructure issues and means of mitigating constraints were considered as part of the planning applications considered and approved recently, including contributions to highways, education health, and sports facilities.

7) Is the site realistically viable and deliverable?

- a) The site is under construction

8) What is the expected timescale for development and is this realistic?

- a) The housing trajectory (see Appendix 1 of the Housing Supply Topic Paper – HO27PM) indicates the first completions in 2016/17 and completion by 2017/18.
- b) Given that construction is currently under way, this is realistic.

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H52 – Land at Spring Lane, Radford Semele

Issue

Whether the proposed housing site allocations at the Growth Villages and Hockley Heath are justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

August 2016

Policies DS11 and DS NEW3

NAME OF SITE: H52 – Land at Spring Lane, Radford Semele

1) What is the current planning status of the site?

- a) The site would form an extension to the site immediately adjoining it to the north, which already has planning permission for up to 65 dwellings granted at appeal in 2014 (APP/T3725/A/14/2221858). A subsequent planning application has been granted permission for reserved matters for the site (W/15/2129).
- b) There are currently no planning permissions or applications on the allocation site itself.

2) How does it fit within the overall spatial strategy?

- a) The site is in a Growth Village outside the Green Belt close to the edge of Leamington Spa. The allocation of this site for housing is consistent with the spatial strategy as follows:
 - i) **Criterion a)** N/A
 - ii) **Criterion b)** The site is consistent with criterion b), being located on the edge of Radford Semele and close to the built-up area of Leamington Spa. The site is well located for village facilities and in particular offers a school, village hall and public open space.
 - iii) **Criterion c)** N/A
 - iv) **Criterion d)** The site is consistent with this criterion as it would not lead to coalescence.
 - v) **Criterion e)** There is no significant heritage impact connected with the site.
 - vi) **Criterion f)** Revised landscape assessment in 2014 considered that there is scope for limited development that could potentially strengthen and enhance the landscape setting with a landscape buffer to the west that links directly into both the field boundaries and the public footpath network.
 - vii) **Criterion g)** N/A

3) In addition to housing provision, are there other benefits that the proposed development would bring?

- a) The Sustainability Appraisal (SA10 and SA11PM) set out the sustainability benefits of each of the allocations. The delivery of approximately 60 dwellings has the potential for a minor medium to long term positive effect on housing provision in the district.
- b) In addition, there will be indirect positive effects on economy (potential increase supply of labour for existing businesses and consumer spending in the area), local community services (likely increased use), health and wellbeing and poverty and social exclusion (access to good quality housing).

4) What are the potential adverse impacts of developing the site? How could they be mitigated?

- a) **Impact on landscape** - The 2013 Landscape Sensitivity and Ecological / Geological Study assessed the landscape sensitivity around the settlement. This found that all the landscape around the settlement was high, high-medium or medium landscape value with the potential for development being to the east and north of the village and not to the west, which would result in coalescence with Leamington Spa. However a review of this advice in 2014 concluded that there is scope for development on the site. The Landscape Sensitivity and Ecological and Geological Study Update 2014 (V17) stated,
- ...there is scope for limited development adjacent to the abrupt garden fence line / garage block that could potentially strengthen and enhance the landscape setting with a landscape buffer to the west that linked directly into both the field boundaries and the public footpath network.*
- b) **Coalescence:** Representations were received to the proposed allocation that expressed concern about the possibility of coalescence with Sydenham, further growth transforming Radford Semele into a suburb of Leamington and development having an adverse impact on rural character of the village and the landscape. Whilst the site is on the western side of the village it is within an area that already has development to the north. It does not therefore reduce the size of the gap to Leamington. This view is supported by the landscape report (V17) and these concerns can be mitigated through appropriate design and layout and are effectively rehearsed and addressed in the landscape assessments.
- c) **Traffic:** Concern has been expressed about increased traffic congestion on School Lane. The junction of School Lane and Radford Road was given consideration as part of the appeal for the site to the north. The Highways Authority has not raised any concerns about this in relation to the extended area.

5) Is the scale of development proposed compatible with the capacity of the village to accommodate further growth in terms of its character and appearance, the level of services and existing infrastructure?

- a) The Village Settlement Hierarchy June 2013 (VO1 – VO3) sets out the Council's approach to the classification of villages and rural settlements. The report explores the size of settlements, availability of services, accessibility of services, facilities and employment from the settlement (see Section 4.0). It applies a scoring system to these factors to reach an objective view on the relevant capacity of each settlement to accommodate development. Table 4.4 of the report shows the resulting score for each village. (N.B. It should be noted that this score does not take into account policy and environmental constraints such as Green Belt, landscape, heritage, character and site availability).
- b) In the Village Settlement Hierarchy work, Radford Semele was identified as a high-performing settlement that came third in the list of most sustainable villages, which have been named 'Primary Service Villages'. All these villages have a primary school, village hall or building used for community events and generally good access to other services.
- c) The Village Profile and Housing Allocations Report 2016 (V18PM) also identified the capacity of the site as being able to provide for 60 dwellings.

- d) Although this village is well placed to provide a sustainable location for an increase in the number of houses allocated, the additional provision has been capped at 60 dwellings to reflect the capacity of Radford Semele Primary School. Respondents have cited lack of **capacity at the school** as a concern. It should be noted that since the Local Plan modifications were published, planning permission has been granted for 150 dwellings elsewhere in Radford Semele. In considering this application (W/16/0196), Warwickshire County Council agreed an alternative approach to primary school provision for the village which involved provision of bus services.

6) What are the infrastructure requirements / costs and are there physical or other constraints to development? How would these be addressed?

- a) The 2013 CIL Viability Study (IN06) and its 2015 addendum (EXAM3) demonstrate that all broad locations in the District are viable in the context of the proposed Local Plan policy requirements, including affordable housing.
- b) The studies tested the ability of a range of housing sites (including a sample of strategic sites) within Warwick District to yield contributions to infrastructure requirements through CIL. Appraisals undertaken also incorporated an allowance of £1,500 per unit to address any residual S278 and Section 106 costs, albeit the actual sums sought will vary according to site specific circumstances. On strategic sites that carry higher costs than other developments, there is a higher allowance of £10,000 per unit for on-site infrastructure (site roads, sewers, utilities, drainage etc.) and community infrastructure (schools, community facilities etc.) plus a further £13,000 per unit to contribute towards on-site community infrastructure through S106. This reflects longer build-out rates of larger sites which require developers to carry costs for much longer times than is the case for smaller schemes.
- c) The ability of residential development to absorb infrastructure requirements through Section 106 / 278 contributions (whilst remaining viable) is also evident by the large number of greenfield strategic sites that currently have planning permission and are presently under construction on sites south of Warwick and Leamington Spa.
- d) Specific infrastructure requirements (physical, social and green) associated with the Plan as a whole are identified and costed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IN07PM). Most components of the IDP do not relate directly to a specific site within the Plan and it is anticipated that infrastructure contributions will be negotiated on a case by case basis in accordance with the CIL Regulations. Full details of infrastructure requirements and costs cannot therefore be set out for each site at this stage.
- e) It should be noted that the IDP is a continuously evolving document and will continue to be refreshed as data on infrastructure requirements are refined or new / changing priorities and needs are identified throughout the plan period. It should also be noted that the Council (in partnership with relevant partners) will continue to explore the availability of other sources of external funding to augment developer contributions.

- f) It is anticipated that housing site H52 will be required to make a proportionate contribution to the following requirements:-

Infrastructure type	Comments (but only if clarification required)
Provision of on-site open space and contributions to other open space requirements	✓
Contributions to Health (Hospitals)	✓
Contributions to Health (G.P. services)	✓
Contributions to Highways / Transport	✓
Contributions to Education (Primary)	✓
Contributions to Education (Secondary)	✓
Contributions to other infrastructure requirements in line with the CIL regs	✓

7) Is the site realistically viable and deliverable?

- a) The 2013 CIL Viability Study and its 2015 addendum demonstrate that all broad locations in the District are viable in the context of the proposed Local Plan policies, including affordable housing. The strongest viability is in rural areas and much of Leamington Spa. This site falls within an area that was assessed as being clearly viable.
- b) The site is deliverable within the Plan period. There is a landowner who is willing to sell and who is working with a development partner. The land owner has indicated a willingness to release the site upon adoption of the Local Plan to enable it to be brought forward for development
- c) There are no major impediments to the site being developed quickly.

8) What is the expected timescale for development and is this realistic?

- a) The recent housing trajectory (HO27PM Appendix 1) identified the site trajectory as being able to deliver 20 units in 2018/19, 30 in 2019/20 and ten in 2020/21.
- b) In light of progress on the site to the north (controlled by the same developer) and the relative lack of constraints, this is considered to be realistic.

N.B. key concerns raised in representations are highlighted **bold**