

Examination of Woking Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Hearing Statement by Gillings Planning on behalf of Churchgate Services

Respondent Reference: 06762/1

Matter 3: Is the SADPD's approach to allocations and safeguard land in the Green Belt (GB) justified and consistent with national policy?

November 2019

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- 1.1 This hearing statement has been prepared on behalf of Churchgate Services and responds to Issue 1.

Issue 1: Does the Woking Green Belt Review provide a robust evidence base to support the policies and allocations of the SADPD?

Q1: Does the Green Belt Review's focus on land 'parcels' provide a sufficiently fine-grained assessment of the GB?

- 1.2 The land parcels assessed within the Green Belt Review are large. As a result, small areas of development adjoining the urban area have not been given due consideration as anomalies to the purpose of the Green Belt.
- 1.3 Specifically, parcel 23 includes our clients interest. The parcel, although smaller than some assessed, is varied and the large grain assessment is flawed.
- 1.4 Should the Review have considered these smaller sites there may have been further amendments to include areas adjacent the urban area and assist in meeting needs. This approach would have been full supported.

Q4: Does the Green Belt Review's objective of identifying suitable, deliverable sites for 550 homes over the plan period provide an appropriate basis for assessment?

- 1.5 As raised within Matter 2, we do not consider that the Plan has given sufficient consideration to meeting the housing needs of older people by allocating sites for specialist accommodation e.g. extra care
- 1.6 Accordingly, the Green Belt Review should have also contained an aim to meet the need for care, in addition to the 550 homes. As such, the aim would have been to identify areas of Green Belt which could be released to provide suitable, deliverable and sustainable sites to meet the needs of the ageing population.
- 1.7 Our client has an interest in a site known as The Meadows, Bagshot Road, Woking. The site is currently in the Green Belt but comprises a vacant two storey building which was previously used as a 24-bedroom care home. It is not isolated, with a public house to its north separating it from the defined urban area. We have previously submitted a Landscape Appraisal for the site and plans demonstrating how an extra care scheme of approximately 60 units could be delivered. Development of the site would not impact on the 5 purposes of the Green Belt including not leading to the sprawl of the built-up area or causing the merging of towns.
- 1.8 This is just one example of a suitable, deliverable and sustainable site within the Green Belt which would help meet the growing housing needs of the elderly. If the Green Belt Review had considered meeting the needs of older people such smaller sites are likely to have been identified as anomalies in the Green Belt and brought within the urban area.

1.9 In summary, we do not consider the basis of the Green Belt Review to be appropriate as it does not seek to address the important and growing need to deliver suitable accommodation for older people.