

## **COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN PART 2 EXAMINATION**

### **Main Matters, Issues and Questions**

#### Persimmon Homes

Persimmon Homes are a national house builder with regional offices in Essex. Persimmon Homes have been very active in Colchester and have an excellent track- record of delivery, having built over 1000 homes in Colchester over the past decade. They are also members of the Home Builders Federation.

#### Main Matter 6 – South Colchester (Policies SC1 to SC3)

Persimmon Homes and the landowners of the substantive part of the emerging allocation have prepared a joint planning application for Land South of Berechurch Hall Road (Policy SC1). The parties had pre-application discussions with Colchester Borough Council (reference 192086) and have submitted an application for residential development for the site.

The application through the determination process is very much progressed with a decision likely in the next four weeks.

It is considered that the policies and site allocations for South Colchester (and specifically in relation to Policy SC1) are justified by the appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance and local context. It is also considered that the South Colchester policies meet the requirements of the Colchester Local Plan Part 1.

Site allocation SC1 has shown how it can contribute to the achievement of the overall housing requirement of the Colchester Local Plan Section 1 through the submitting and progressing of an application for residential development to the Council. With a decision on the application imminent, the allocation has shown that it is able to deliver houses in the near future.

It can therefore be seen that allocation SC1 is available, deliverable and achievable to meet the requirements of the policy and contribute to the Borough's housing land supply.

#### Main Matter 8 – West Colchester (Policies WC1 to WC5)

A planning application for residential development for part of the allocation WC2 (Land to the North of London Road, Stanway) has been submitted and is currently pending determination with a decision likely in the next three months.

It is considered that the policies and site allocations for West Colchester (and specifically in relation to Policy WC2) are justified by the appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance and local context. It is also considered that the South Colchester policies meet the requirements of the Colchester Local Plan Part 1.

This part of site allocation WC2 has shown how it can contribute to the achievement of the overall housing requirement of the Colchester Local Plan Section 1 through the submitting and progressing of an application for residential development to the Council. With a decision on the application in the next three months, the allocation has shown that it is able to deliver houses in the near future.

Whilst the remaining land within the emerging allocation is not subject to this submitted application, we understand that there are no issues which would prevent the site coming forward.

It can therefore be seen that allocation WC2 is available, deliverable and achievable to meet the requirements of the policy and contribute to the Borough's housing land supply.



**Persimmon**

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## Main Matter 14 – Affordable Housing, Development Density, Housing Diversity and Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Council's affordable housing policy, DM8, requires all major residential development to provide 30% of their homes as affordable dwellings. However, we are concerned that the policy does not reflect the fact that some development scenarios face a more challenging market than others and despite what is stated in the policy it does not allow for flexibility to take into account changing market conditions.

As well as this, the policy does not cross reference an up-to-date evidence base to support what is being required therefore it does not provide justification or have regard to national guidance or local context.

The policy is not clear with regard to the tenure mix for affordable housing. The policy states that there is an overwhelming need for affordable rented properties which should be reflected in development proposals however it provides no indication as to the tenure mix that would be expected.

The policy also states that the affordable housing provision should proportionately reflect the mix of market units however it is not stated whether this requirement is as a result of any evidence gathered to reflect the needs in the Borough.

In order to make Policy DM8 clear as to how a decision maker should react to a development proposal, it would be of use to provide clear information in the policy as to the expectations regarding tenure and dwelling size mix.

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