

Gladman Developments Ltd

Colchester Borough Council - Section 2 Local Plan Examination

Matter 9 Hearing Statement



April 2021

Main Matter 9 – Sustainable Settlements (Policies SS1 to SS16)

- **Are the Sustainable Settlements policies and site allocations justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, including the meeting the requirements of the CLP 1?**

9.1 Gladman are satisfied that the Sustainable Settlements policies (SS1 to SS16) and site allocations are appropriately justified, have regard to national guidance and local context and meet the requirements of the CLP Section 1. The proposed spatial strategy and distribution of development is supported by robust evidence and is soundly based. The Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community has been found sound by the examining Inspector for the CLP Section 1 and is concluded to be justified and deliverable.

9.2 In regard to Policy SS13: Rowhedge, Gladman note that the allocations in the Publication version of the Local Plan changed, and that the policy now allocates just 40 dwellings to the settlement. Clearly the settlement is sustainable, and whilst there are a number of constraints within the surrounding areas there are also areas, which are free from constraint, which would offer additional areas for development. Gladman consider that Rowhedge is a settlement which could accommodate further development. Sites to the north and east of the existing settlement could provide sustainable locations to meet development needs to ensure that the vitality and viability of the settlement is retained. Gladman do not consider that the current level of housing provided will allow the settlement to thrive.

- **Do the housing land site allocations within Sustainable Settlements show how they will contribute to the achievement of the housing requirement of the CLP Section 1 (14,720 new homes) and its timescale for delivery?**

9.3 The Sustainable Settlements policies SS1 – SS16 provide an indication of how many new dwellings are anticipated from each individual sustainable settlement (second tier of the spatial hierarchy) and how they will be achieved – either through housing allocations within the CLP Section 2 or through designated housing allocations within village prepared neighbourhood plans. A number of the sites are currently subject to ‘live’ planning applications or an application is currently being prepared by developers, land promoters and agents to submit following the adoption of the CLP Section 2.

9.4 The villages of West Bergholt, Wivenhoe and Eight Ash Green have all ‘made’ neighbourhood plans between the date of submission of the Plan (October 2017) and April 2021. The Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan was recently subject to public consultation on the Regulation 16 stage version until 5th April 2021. The West Mersea Draft Neighbourhood Plan was subject to Pre-Submission consultation (Regulation 14 stage) until January 2021. The independent examiner for the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan concluded that the Plan should not proceed to referendum as it was found not to

meet the Basic Conditions nor the legal requirement. It has now returned to the Regulation 14 stage. The above demonstrates that the majority of the neighbourhood plans in Colchester are currently 'made' or at an advanced stage of their preparation.

- 9.5 *Topic Paper 2 – Housing Matters* responds to housing delivery issues which have arisen in the borough since the submission of the CLP Section 2 Plan to the Secretary of State in October 2017, recognising that there has been quite considerable change over the course of the last 3.5 years regarding housing land supply and delivery. At Appendix 2 of the topic paper, a '15 Year Housing Trajectory – October 2020' is included which demonstrates anticipated housing delivery data from all the allocated and committed sites between monitoring years 2019/20 - 2034/35. It is unknown as to why CBC have included the monitoring year 2034/35 since it falls outside of the designated plan period (2017-2033).
- 9.6 A Local Plan housing trajectory has not been included in the appendices of the Submission version of the CLP Section 2. Gladman recommend that a Local Plan housing trajectory should be included within the CLP Section 2 for two principal reasons. Firstly, they can provide a useful visualisation and easy to follow table for users of the plan to understand when forecast housing is due to come forward. Secondly, they are a useful tool by which to monitor plan delivery and for the Council to be able to evaluate in the future how accurate the Council's predictions on housing delivery have been.
- 9.7 As demonstrated in Gladman's Matter 2 Hearing Statement and *Topic Paper 2 – Housing Matters*, CBC now claim to be able to demonstrate an overall deliverable housing supply of 16,052 dwellings over the plan period (2017-2033) which equates to a surplus of +1,342 dwellings above the minimum overall housing requirement of 14,720 dwellings. This overall deliverable housing supply figure is subject to change and is dependent on confirmation from CBC regarding the overall quantum of dwellings they anticipate being delivered from the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community until the end of the plan period.