

Examination Statement

Matter 9

Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040

Prepared For

Fairfax Acquisitions Limited

Representor numbers:

**1192295, 1192297, 1192284,
1192299**

4654

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bell cornwell

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

Bell Cornwell LLP, Unit 2, Meridian Office Park, Osborn Way,
Hook, Hampshire RG27 9HY

01256 766673 | info@bell-cornwell.co.uk | bell-cornwell.co.uk



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of Fairfax Acquisitions Limited, who have land interests at Newhouse Farm, Horsham, land to the north of Church Farm Walk, Upper Beeding, and Storrington (allocation HA18 ST01).
- 1.2 These representations provide a response to the matters and questions raised by the Inspector and to that extent do not focus on sites not included in the plan, that could otherwise be known as omission sites.
- 1.3 This response focuses on the questions asked in light of the soundness requirements set out in paragraph 35 of the NPPF (September 2023) that requires the plan to be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.



2 MATTER 9 – SITES ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE PLAN

MATTER 9, ISSUE 1 – WHETHER THE STRATEGIC SITES ALLOCATED IN THE PLAN AND ASSOCIATED POLICIES ARE JUSTIFIED, EFFECTIVE, CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL POLICY AND POSITIVELY PREPARED?

Question 2: Paragraph 10.125 of the Plan says the total number of homes for each site allocated is expected to be within 10% of the figure quoted, is this justified and effective? The policies also refer to a number of homes to be delivered within the plan period in different ways e.g. ‘at least’, ‘approximately’? Is this effective?

- 2.1 The plan is not clear in its use of language as site settlement policies, which include the allocation of sites are then called strategic policies, however there are also three strategic sites, also entitled strategic sites. The difference between strategic and not strategic is not clear.
- 2.2 Regardless, the word ‘at least’ and ‘approximately’ is interchanged throughout a series of site allocation policies, be they considered strategic or not and this lacks clarity.
- 2.3 Paragraph 10.125 confirms that sites are expected to be within 10% of the figure quoted in the policy, however, given the significant failing of the plan to meet housing need and that of neighbouring authorities, there can be no justification for limiting growth. If an allocated site can prove through a planning submission it is capable of delivering more homes than set out in policy this should be welcomed and encouraged to reflect National Policy and address housing need in a more effective manner.

MATTER 9, ISSUE 2- WHETHER THE OTHER SITES (SETTLEMENT SITE ALLOCATIONS) ALLOCATED IN THE PLAN AND ASSOCIATED POLICIES ARE JUSTIFIED, EFFECTIVE, CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL POLICY AND POSITIVELY PREPARED?

Question 14: Is strategic Policy HA18: Storrington and Sullington Housing Allocations Sound? A) STO1, B) ST02?

- 2.4 The allocation of STO1: Land to the north of Melton Drive, is sound. Fairfax Acquisition Limited has control over half the site and is working towards the submission of a planning application. They will be present at the examination to answer any detailed questions in regard to delivery.
- 2.5 The allocation is considered sound on the following basis:



- Positively prepared – it will deliver new homes in a sustainable manner to help towards addressing housing need.
- Justified – Storrington has a good range of services as a large village and therefore should be able to accommodate growth. The site itself is located about 1km from the centre of Storrington where there is access to a range of local shops and community / leisure facilities. There is also a good bus service from the village centre. within walking distance of the village centre and accessible to the services and facilities provided there. There is landscape capacity to accommodate development here and is not a designated nature conservation site.
- Effective – the site is deliverable over the plan period and Fairfax Acquisitions are working towards a planning application early within the plan period.
- Consistent with National Policy – the proposal represents sustainable development, immediate joining the built-up area of a large village in the District.

2.6 We believe the site can accommodate more homes than suggested in the plan and could look to deliver alternative points of access. To that extent we would recommend modifications to the policy to enable later flexibility in the approach and ensure the most efficient use of land. It is noted that the neighbouring site at Downsview Avenue has outline planning permission for a development density of 30 dwellings per hectare. We would suggest a similar density and approach should be taken for ST01 with a capacity for the site to deliver at least 120 dwellings.

2.7 The current wording of ST01 requires a “single, comprehensive development” of the site, which would suggest a single planning application. We do not consider this necessary. The western part of the site, fronting Fryern Road is owned by Wates Developments Limited. It is our view the two schemes could come forward independently of one another provide access is secured and there is no need to require a single application to achieve well thought through, comprehensive development.



- 2.8 The site does lie in the Storrington to West Chiltington Green Gap (which is defined by the 'made' Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan through policy 9 (SSWNP, made in September 2019), however the evidence base that supports this local plan included the Site Assessment Report (H11, December 2023) which confirms *"there is no intervisibility between the two settlements with undulating topography and intervening woodland preventing direct sight lines between the two villages"*. It is noted in the Site Assessment Report that the adjacent site allocated in the Made Neighbourhood Plan for 60 dwellings (Downsview Avenue), is also in this gap. Downsview Avenue has since received outline planning permission for 62 dwellings reference DC/19/2015, accepting the principal of housing in this location, in this part of the gap between Chiltington and Storrington. This Site Assessment Report confirms that this site presents an opportunity to consolidate the settlement on the northern edge of the village without further erosion of the gap.
- 2.9 IT is acknowledged there are two listed buildings to the north of the site (Grade II Listed East Wantley House and Grade II* Listed West Wantley House) and any future planning application and layout will take into consideration the setting of these buildings. Equally, the site is not designated as a nature conservation site but is within the Bat Sustenance Zone, this will be addressed in a future application with relevant site assessment studies and mitigation (if required).
- 2.10 Fairfax Acquisition limited are liaising with Wates Development Limited to deliver comprehensive development across the two parcels.
- 2.11 The development of this site can deliver a high quality, landscape led residential development that will help meeting housing need in a sustainable manner. It can deliver significant more homes than suggest in the current wording of the policy and therefore ST01 should be amended to reflect that.