

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-2040)

Hearing Statement Relating to Matter 4
On Behalf of Vistry Group PLC
Relating to Land to the North of Mannings Heath

November 2024

Vistry Group

Gillings
Planning

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Client

Vistry Group PLC

Date of Issue

22nd November 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client Vistry Group PLC ('Vistry') in response to the publication of the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 (the 'Plan').
- 1.2 Our client previously made representations at Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages of the Local Plan preparation.
- 1.3 Vistry have land interests within the Plan area at a site known as Land to the North of Mannings Heath.

Mannings Heath

- 1.4 Representations have previously been submitted to the Council's Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 consultation stages on the Horsham District Local Plan on behalf of Countryside Properties ('Countryside'), which is now part of the Vistry Group. This included documentation which set out the significant benefits of the Site, which adjoins the settlement boundary of Mannings Heath.



Aerial photograph showing the Mannings Heath site outlined in red (by courtesy of Google ©)

This Statement

- 1.5 This brief Hearing Statement has been prepared in accordance with the prevailing planning policy and guidance, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), September 2023 and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 1.6 We do not seek to unnecessarily repeat points raised in the representations submitted by Vistry Group, but we have answered the questions posed by the Planning Inspector in the Matters, Issues and Questions (14th October 2024) where we feel it would be helpful to do so.
- 1.7 Gillings Planning, on behalf of the Vistry Group PLC wish to take a full and active part in the relevant Hearing sessions relating to their interests in the site.

2.0 Our Responses to the Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 4 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Matter 4, Issue 2 – Whether the approach to the natural environment, biodiversity, landscape, coalescence, countryside, green and blue infrastructure and local green space is justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Q2. *Is Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection sound?*

a) Should this policy make reference to its geographical application on the Policies Map?

2.1 As set out in our Representations, we have highlighted a conflict between policies SP14 and SP3 with regards to sites allocated in the Local Plan or in Neighbourhood Plans at the edge of settlements. Clear geographical delineation of Policy SP14 would assist.

Q3. *Is Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence sound?*

a) Does this policy apply to the whole District or just specific locations within it? Does it have a geographical application which should be identified on the submission Policies Map?

2.2 As set out in our Representations, we have highlighted a flaw in the policy because, as currently drafted, it would apply to all planning application proposals on sites outside of the built-up area boundaries. Clear geographical delineation of Policy SP15 would assist.

c) Is there any conflict between this policy and others in the Plan which allocate sites for development?

2.3 As set out in our Representations, we have highlighted a flaw in the policy because, as currently drafted, it would apply to all planning application proposals on sites outside of the built-up area boundaries. Clear geographical delineation of Policy SP15 would assist.