

MATTER 3 – HOUSING

- 8. *Is the amount of land allocated for housing sufficient to meet needs? If not, how will the Plan ensure that an appropriate housing land supply will be maintained in the medium and longer terms? Will they provide for an appropriate housing mix, including affordable housing, provision for gypsies and travelers, in the right locations?***

The District Council's overall housing provision is derived from the adopted East Midlands Regional Plan housing requirement and subsequently confirmed in the Core Strategy which was adopted in March 2011. The overall requirement for new dwellings and the approximate residual dwelling requirement (allowing for completions and commitments from 01/04/06) is set out at Appendix D of the adopted Core Strategy.

There was debate at the Core Strategy hearing in respect of the extent of flexibility that should be accorded to the residual housing provision, particularly in respect of the designated Service Centres and Principal Villages. The prevailing view was that to allow too much flexibility in some of these settlements could potentially undermine the role and function of the settlement hierarchy and adversely impact upon the character and/or sustainability of the individual town or village.

Having Client interests in the Principal Village locations of Collingham, where only a single large site is being allocated, and our concern is whether, in the main, there is a sufficient provision of land to meet needs established by the Core Strategy. The question arises as to whether a single site allocation is capable, over time, of delivering the current requirements or whether further sites such as ours should also be allocated at this stage in order to allow for flexibility in terms of housing numbers and to ensure long term delivery.

The District Council's previous options consultation on the Site Allocations DPD in 2011 set out Preferred Sites and Alternative Sites for consideration and public comment. We have to argue the point that the reserve site in Collingham could be elevated to allocation status in the short to medium term either to maintain supply to meet general housing needs or to address specific affordable or specialist needs that the allocated sites have failed or are unsuitable to address.

We consider therefore that the allocations mechanism for delivering the housing needs quantified by the Core Strategy may potentially be enhanced by introducing certain reserve allocations as previously identified in the plan process, to accommodate any unforeseen 'fall out' of allocated sites in the shorter term or to accommodate any

specialist and affordable housing needs (to provide a mix of development) that may arise during the plan period.

9. *Are the allocated sites viable and deliverable for first 5 years, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure, affordable housing, environmental constraints and development management policies? Is the Plan sufficiently flexible to enable delivery given the current market conditions?*

We have no reason to doubt that the development cannot commence on the allocated site within Collingham village (Co/MU01) within the first 5-years of the DPD although, as a large site, there could be initial delays in order to connect to local infrastructure and to address environmental constraints which could clearly restrict full delivery within that timeframe. The reserve site in Collingham (Co/AS/2), which is clearly smaller and directly linked to existing infrastructure and surrounding development, will add to the housing numbers that can be brought forward within the first 5-years and will provide a site that can be consented, commenced and completed within the first 5-year period, thus assisting the LPA greatly in meeting their targets.

10. *Are alternative proposals that have been put forward in representations appropriate and deliverable? Have they been subject to sustainability appraisal compatible with that for the Plan?*

With specific reference to our Client's land interests in Collingham we are fully confident of deliverability and consider that this has been demonstrated to the LPA through previous correspondence. Discounting the allocated site, we are not aware of any additional/alternative sites in this village which we consider to be more appropriate, more sustainable and more deliverable than site Co/AS/2, which we have promoted.

We have not considered alternative sites outside of Collingham and cannot comment on the suitability of these as additional sites, replacement sites or fallback options for the sites currently identified in the Publication Version DPD.

An indicative plan of how my Client's site could be developed can be found on the following page.

11. *Are the locations identified the most appropriate when considered against all reasonable alternatives?*

Our comments in respect of this question only relate to our specific knowledge of Collingham, and our promotion of site Co/AS/2.

The 'Principal Village' of Collingham has a large Conservation Area of very high quality extending over most of the 'historical' western half and all of the southern side of the village, and a number of 'Main Open Areas' linked by footpaths within the compact built up area within and adjoining the Conservation Area that are highly valued by its local residents. Flood risk from the Trent also impacts on development potential to the west and north of the village. The area of search for alternative sites has therefore had to consider the appropriateness of open land within or adjoining the Conservation Area and/or Main Open Areas. My Client's landholding is within the currently designated Main Open Areas but is outside of the Conservation Area.

In our opinion there are no other alternative sites within the village of Collingham that are more suitable or appropriate for development than site Co/AS/2. Site Co/AS/1 represents a development outside of the village envelope and therefore within open countryside, and site and the development of the land to the west of our site falls within both the western portion of the MOA (closer to the heart of the village) and the Conservation Area – both of which pose significant constraints on future development.

Our full comments in this regard can be found in response to Matter 5.