

## 1. Instructions and Introduction

- 1.1 Neame Sutton Limited, Chartered Town Planners, is instructed by Catesby Estates Plc ("Catesby") to prepare and submit representations in respect of the Further Main Modifications put forward by Epping Forest District Council ("the Council") to address the various matters of soundness raised by the Inspector.
- 1.2 The remainder of this document focusses only on those Further Main Modifications that Catesby considers require amendment in order to achieve a Sound Plan. These representations should be read alongside Catesby's previous representations and the evidence presented at the Examination both in its written statements and orally at the hearing sessions.

## 2. Representations on Further Main Modifications

- 2.1 **MM111 – New Paragraph 6.53 – OBJECT Unsound:** This Further Main Modification seeks to introduce a new paragraph to the supporting text for Policy D7 to satisfy the important issue raised by the Inspector regarding the need for an early review of the Plan.
- 2.2 The wording proposed does not however satisfy the issue and instead simply replicates the requirement set out in the first part of Paragraph 33 of the Framework 2021 for a review of the Plan at least once every five years<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.3 What MM111 fails to address is the second part of Paragraph 33, which states that:
- 'Relevant strategic policies **will need** updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly;...'  
(bold and underlying is our emphasis)

---

<sup>1</sup> This is also a statutory requirement set out at Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012.

- 2.4 As the Inspector will be aware this Plan was submitted for examination under the transitional provisions put in place within Annex 1 of the Framework 2018 and its housing requirement therefore follows the approach set out in the Framework 2012. In other words this Plan will, at the point of adoption, be based on National policy that is over 10 years old.
- 2.5 The consequence is that the Plan is effectively out-of-date in terms of its approach to meeting housing need is concerned. If the Government's current Standard Method of calculating Local Housing Need (as set out in the Framework 2021 and corresponding PPG) is applied to Epping Forest the Need equates to 973 dpa. This compares with the minimum housing requirement set out in the Plan of 518 dpa. The Standard Method therefore comprises 88% uplift on the minimum housing requirement in the Plan. This is significant.
- 2.6 The under provision of housing in Epping Forest as a result of both the protracted Local Plan Examination process and the Council's conscious decision to submit a plan against the old Framework 2012 requirements<sup>2</sup> has led to a material worsening of the affordability position in the Borough from 14.50 in 2017 upto 15.42 in 2021<sup>3</sup>. This makes Epping Forest one of the least affordable places to live in the country outside of London.
- 2.7 The above points are of particular importance when considering compliance with the second part of Paragraph 33 of the Framework 2021. It is clear that the local housing need figure has already changed significantly and the impact in terms of a material worsening of affordability is already evident.
- 2.8 The Council cannot therefore simply choose to rely on the standard 5-year review clause within the Plan. Instead the Council must be placed under an obligation to commence an immediate review of the Plan upon adoption. If the Council fails to commence an immediate review the consequences for community will be significant and far reaching in terms of affordability, consequent affordable housing need and general housing supply.
- 2.9 MM111 should therefore be amended to compel the Council to undertake an immediate review of the Plan commencing upon its adoption.
- 2.10 The modification should take the form of a policy requirement rather than simply supporting text to the Plan and should require the Council to bring forward a full review of the Plan with the objective of meeting the current Local Housing Need in full<sup>4</sup>. The review should begin immediately upon adoption of this Plan with the submission of the review for examination within 24-36 months.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Foreword to the Submission version of the Plan (December 2017) (**EB114**) makes plain that the Council is submitting the Plan before end of March 2018 deadline in order to avoid the risk of the housing requirement rising from 11,400 to over 20,000 homes by 2033.

<sup>3</sup> Median work place based affordability ratios published by ONS in March 2022

<sup>4</sup> Currently calculated via the Government's Standard Method or any such replacement methodology adopted by Government.

- 2.11 This approach has been taken elsewhere in a number of instances including in the nearby authority of Brentwood where the Inspectors set out in their report of 23 February 2022 a similar provision<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.12 This Plan was consciously progressed by the Council leadership to circumvent the obligations set out in the Framework 2018. Whilst it is important that the Plan is adopted in order to conclude the protracted examination process it is equally, if not more, important that the Council undertakes the immediate review set out above to properly address the housing need that exists now.
- 

---

<sup>5</sup> Report to Brentwood Borough Council (23 February 2022) – Inspector's Yvonne Wright and Mike Worden – Paragraph 359 on Page 77 of the report.