

Stroud Local Plan Review Examination Examination Statement on behalf of Redrow Homes

MATTER 6F - Berkeley

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Hearing Statement is submitted on behalf of Redrow Homes Limited (Redrow) in response to the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions published in December 2022 in advance of the forthcoming hearing sessions for the Stroud Local Plan Review.

1.2 Redrow has recently acquired land at Station Road, Berkeley, which is proposed as a draft allocation for 110 dwellings under Site Allocation Policy PS33: North West Berkeley. The subject site benefits from full planning consent for 107 homes and ancillary development (ref: 20/0100/FUL), all pre commencement conditions have discharged and work commenced on site in October 2022. By the end of 2025 all 107 dwellings will be delivered at the subject site.

MATTER 6F – BERKELEY

2.1 In consideration of the Inspector's Question 41 (a -d) below some additional supporting information is provided.

2.2 Does the policy clearly set out what type and level of open space uses and strategic landscaping would be required or is this covered by other policies? Are the requirements justified?

The approved scheme provides areas of open space at the West of the site and also smaller feature space in the centre and the pedestrian entrance to the East. This totals c. 2.75 hectares of onsite natural and semi natural open space. A linear walk is also located to the northside of the site providing connection through the site. Multi-functional green infrastructure, as provided on site, performs a range of functions including improved flood risk management, provision of accessible green space, climate change adaptation and biodiversity enhancement.

No formal play space has been included the approved scheme as the site is located opposite to the existing provision of the recreation ground/Cannon Park. Through determination of the application, Natural England noted and welcomed the green infrastructure approach taken.

2.3 How will development be required to minimise landscape impacts, safeguard and enhance local biodiversity and provide new and enhanced footpath and cycle links? What are the specific requirements, are they justified and do they need to be made clear in the policy or are such issues covered by other Plan policies?

The character of the site is influenced by its location on the edge of the existing settlement with the adjacent residential estate on one side and the main road on the other. The site slopes to the West. The approved layout provides built form from the East of the site, closer to the existing built form, with open space and SUDS ponds to the West. Whilst development of the site will result in a localised change in character from agricultural field to residential scheme with the layout, landscaping and open space provided this will only be a very localised impact. Any views will be through the boundary treatment and landscaping with the backdrop of the existing residential built form of the adjacent estate. The scheme does not have a significant adverse impact on the wider landscape setting or character.

The approved scheme places active travel at the heart of its design concept, incorporating a circular and linear pedestrian route and a cycle way connecting the scheme with the settlement centre.

In light of the site's previous arable use the onsite site habitat is of negligible ecological importance however the field boundaries and margins are more important and are mainly retained as part of the scheme. The landscaping including ponds, planting, hedging and buffer along with the ongoing management (LEMP) provide enhancement and more than offset the losses.

2.4 The policy states that development should not increase flood risk on or off site. The supporting text refers to flood risk attenuation and enhancements. Do specific flood risk requirements need to be set out in this policy or are such matters covered by other Plan policies?

The site is located on gently sloping agricultural land which slopes down to the West and nearby brook where part of the site is within Flood zone 3. The layout and mitigation of the scheme reduce the risk and impact of flooding, the development will be safe for its lifetime and not increase flooding elsewhere. Through the course of the application's determination both the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority were satisfied that that it has been demonstrated that the development will not be at risk of flooding and will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

2.5 Some of the representations raise concerns about other issues relating to the development of the site, including increased traffic impact and the availability of local services and facilities. Have such factors been suitably assessed as part of the process to allocate this site?

Increased traffic impact - Vehicle access to the site is off the B4066, the access arrangement has been deemed suitable and safe by the highways officer. Significant focus has been placed on developing proposed pedestrian and cycle links within the site and onto Station Road. A high-quality link has now been proposed which conforms with current guidance on active travel. Pedestrian links into Berkeley are generally good, but some dropped kerb crossings/ tactile paving is missing which this proposal needs to address, and a contribution has been paid to Gloucestershire County to fund improvements to accessibility around the town.

Public Transport services are proposed to be improved with a focus given to providing a new early morning commuter service to Dursley via the 62 bus service. A contribution will be made to fund this new service. Additionally, contributions are sought to support funding home to school transport services, again this is proposed to be included in the planning obligations.

The availability of local services and facilities - Berkeley as a Second Tier settlement, it is a community which allows for short distance trips such as convenience retail, medical, and primary education to be undertaken on foot, bicycle or scooter.

CONCLUSION

3.1 The proposed allocation PS33 is a deliverable and appropriate site for housing. The site already benefits from full planning consent, and works have commenced on site with the consent being implemented. The first legal completion will likely take place in Autumn 2023, with all units delivering into Stroud's housing trajectory by the end of 2025.

3.2 Redrow will not be attending the relevant hearing session in respect of the aforementioned site.