

# **Erewash Core Strategy Review Examination Response to Matters, Issues & Questions (MIQs)**

## **Main Matter 6: Housing Allocations**

### **Issue:**

**Whether the proposed housing site allocations are justified, effective and consistent with national policy.**

**Relevant Policies: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6**

**Please note: In responding to the questions below the Council should identify and address specific key concerns raised in the representations.**

### ***Questions***

#### **7. Strategic Policy 1.4 North of Spondon**

##### **7A. What is the background to the site allocation and how was it identified?**

The hearing statement for Main Matter 3 provides additional context however, in summary:

The site was submitted to the Council as part of the Regulation 18.1 consultation process in 2020. The site falls within the 'Extension of the conurbation into the Green Belt' Growth Option tested through SA1 (see document CD4) which found it to be the next most sustainable option for growth available after the Borough had already exhausted more sustainable options A-E as outlined within that document. It was therefore proposed as one of the allocation options within the Revised Options for Growth document consulted on in 2021 (Regulation 18.2). Since this time, the Council has worked closely with the site promoters to develop Strategic Policy 1.4 as found within the Core Strategy Review (CSR).

Through SA3 (see document CD4), the version of the site contained within the CSR was tested for its sustainability alongside 24 other site options that had been made known to us through the CSR process. All site options tested spanned the entire spectrum of strategic growth options appraised within SA1. The assessment tables for each housing allocation option are contained within Appendices B1-B6 of the SA (see documents CD7 E-K). Strategic Policy 1.4 allocation was found to be a sustainable site option. The results from its assessment compared with other sites can be viewed at Table 9 of the SA (see document CD4).

**7B. What would be the effect of developing the site on the purposes of the Green Belt?**

Effects from developing the site on the purposes of the Green Belt are set out within the Strategic Growth Area (SGA) Assessments document (see document EBH1 and document EBH2 for associated mapping).

**7C. Are there exceptional circumstances to alter the Green Belt in this particular case? If so what are they?**

Yes. The Council has failed the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) since its inception (detailed further within the Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Paper – see document EBH3) and can demonstrate that it has exhausted all other reasonable options before considering locations in the Green Belt, including directing development first and foremost to available land within Growth Options A-D tested by SA1 (see document CD4) which are all non-Green Belt options. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA – see document EBH4) identifies all sites known to be available for development within Growth Options A-C and Option D (new settlements not in the Green Belt) results in the proposed allocation of South Stanton (Strategic Policy 1.2). Even with the housing provision resulting from these sites, the Council would not be able to identify a Five Year Housing Land Supply without extending development via strategic allocations into land currently within Green Belt (see document EBH3). The Council also sought to identify any potential for the redistribution of some of the Borough's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) to Nottingham Core and Derby Housing Market Area authorities. As evident from the statements of common ground and duly made representations of those authorities, no offers to accommodate some of the Borough's OAN were received. The Council is of the view that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development and thus exceptional circumstances do exist in alignment with Paragraph 141 of the NPPF.

**7D. Should the policy set out what compensation measures will be expected where there is Green Belt release for development and how it will be calculated?**

Access improvements to the Green Belt are proposed in criteria 2 and 3 of Policy 1.4, as supported by NPPF paragraph 142.

**7E. What is the basis for the scale of development proposed and is this justified?**

Strategic Policy 1.4 allocation represents the extent of land promoted to the Council and has become intrinsic to delivery of the wider spatial strategy. Development is contained on the southern side of Spondon Wood which forms a natural Green Belt boundary. Subsequently a planning application has been submitted for 263 dwellings, since amended to 259 dwellings.

**7F. What is the background to the specific policy requirements? Are they justified and consistent with national policy? Do they provide clear and effective guidance on constraints and suitable mitigation?**

The specific policy requirements are informed by the Sustainability Appraisal (see document CD4) supporting the Core Strategy Review (CSR) and findings of the Strategic Growth Area Assessments (see document EBH1). The Council has also worked closely with the site promoters through development of the CSR which has also informed the Council's understanding of site constraints. Justification for these requirements is provided in the text of the CSR and include the following:

Criterion 1: Creation of a new vehicular junction and pedestrian access on to the A6096 Dale Road, associated pair of bus halts, and a pavement along the west side of the A6096 Dale Road to Spondon. This is to be achieved whilst minimising disturbance to the Dunshill Shelterbelt local wildlife site along part of the site's eastern boundary, and will form a natural and logical extension to the community of Spondon. Access directly onto the A6096 is available and suitable to serve the development. Pavements and bus halts will provide sustainable access to the facilities available in Spondon.

Criterion 2: Provision of a suitable interface between the development and Spondon Wood, to include a semi-natural buffer zone, to protect the biodiversity interest of the wood. Given that Spondon Wood includes areas of ancient woodland, this will avoid private gardens backing onto the site, expose the edge of the wood to natural surveillance, and prevent unregulated vehicular access.

Criterion 3: An extension of Dale Abbey Footpath 58 into the site improve access to the open countryside, thereby supporting NPPF paragraph 120 (a).

Criterion 4: Financial contributions towards the provision of additional pupil capacity at schools in Spondon where necessary, given this is where children living in the new development are likely to attend school.

Criterion 5: 10% of the homes provided to be for on-site affordable home ownership, and a financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing in lieu of providing up to 20% of the homes as additional affordable housing, subject to viability. Government policy requires 10% of new homes on large sites to provide affordable routes to home ownership. Erewash planning policy requires that up to an additional 20% should be provided for other forms of affordable housing. However, as the demand for affordable housing in this part of Erewash is limited, that public benefit would be better utilised by accepting a financial payment in lieu of on-site provision in order to fund provision in locations of higher demand.

**7G. What are the highways implications of the allocation and how will any impacts be mitigated?**

Highways impacts of the plan as a whole are set out in ETB1.1. That work has been carried out in partnership with all partners with interests relevant to the site including Derbyshire County Council Highways Authority, Derby City Council Highways Authority, and National Highways.

Criterion 1 of Policy 1.4 set out the transport mitigations identified through both the transport modelling and informed through the Sustainability Appraisal that will be applied to this allocation. The transport modelling also identifies a sub-regional list of junction improvements that can be further tested at the planning application stage for this site.

Even with the proposed mitigations, the site will result in an increase in traffic. However, it is not considered that either unacceptable highway safety impacts, or severe impacts on the road network, would result from that increase in traffic that would justify the prevention of this allocation.

**7H. Does the policy identify appropriate and necessary infrastructure requirements? How will these be provided and funded? Is this sufficiently clear?**

Traffic and transport impacts have been considered under the answer to Question 7G above.

Suitable provision for schools is provided by Criterion 4 of Policy 1.4. No evidence of need for any additional provision has been submitted to the CSR.

**7I. What implications will the allocation have on Derby City?**

The strategic cross-boundary issue of the impact on education has been addressed in the policies allocating housing development on their boundary, as supported by the evidence extracted from the Local Education Authorities by a Freedom of Information Request made by the Council. The substantive strategic cross boundary issue of impacts on Derby City's transport network has been addressed through Derby City's engagement with the transport modelling evidence that has identified the two junctions in Derby City where improvements would be sought through subsequent planning applications. These matters are covered in the Matter 2 Hearing Statement.

**7J. Are there potential adverse effects not covered above? If so what are they and how would they be addressed and mitigated? (The Council's response should address key issues raised in the representations).**

Matters raised in representations include the impacts of developing a greenfield site, including impacts on biodiversity (notably the woodland), landscape and loss of Green Belt, school provision, other local services and impacts on traffic and transport.

The loss of Green Belt is considered in answer to Questions 7B-7D above.

Impacts on biodiversity in general are addressed by Criteria 2-4 of Strategic Policy 1.1. Specifically, the Dunshill Shelterbelt is a designated local wildlife site which forms part of the eastern boundary, whilst Spondon Wood is a designated local wildlife site adjacent the site to northern site boundary. Criterion 1 of Policy 1.4 requires the new access arrangements to minimise disturbance to the Dunshill Shelterbelt, recognising that some disturbance is inevitable in order to create a safe access. Criterion 2 of Strategic Policy 1.4 requires a suitable interface to be provided to Spondon Wood, including a semi-natural buffer zone, to protect the biodiversity interest of the wood.

There are no landscape designations affecting the site. Traffic and transport impacts have been considered under the answer to Questions 7G and 7H above. Suitable provision for schools is covered by Criterion 4 of Policy 1.4.

No evidence of need for any additional service provision has been submitted to the CSR.

The Statement of Consultation also covers matters raised in the representations at each stage of the plan's preparation. This can be found in the submission documents section of the Examination Library.

**7K. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the allocation is viable and deliverable within the plan period? What is the situation with regards land ownership and developer interest?**

Delivery of the allocation including all infrastructure required by Policy 1.4 has been found to be viable in the Local Plan Viability Assessment (see document EBC04). The proposed allocation is under a single ownership with developer commitments pending the sites allocation through the appropriate local plan process. The Council has worked closely with the site promoters since its emergence as a potential allocation. More recently the promoters have submitted a full planning application which is currently under consideration (ref: ERE/0923/0024).

**7L. How will the site be brought forward for development? What mechanisms will there be to ensure a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development, ensuring that infrastructure requirements are provided?**

The site will be brought forward by the planning application which has been submitted to the Council. The infrastructure requirements identified in the policy will then be delivered as conditions of Section 106 agreements associated with a planning consent, as appropriate.

**7M. What is the expected timescale and rate of development and is this realistic?**

As set out in the Erewash Housing Trajectory (**see document EBH3a**), development is expected to commence in Year 3 of the first five years of the plan period and contribute a total of 200 dwellings to the Five Year Housing Land Supply. This was amended to 250 homes in the revised trajectory (see document EBH3b/EBC11)

**7N. Overall, is the allocation justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy?**

For the reasons set out in the answer to the questions above, the allocation is considered to be justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy.