Briefing Note

Ourref 50129/JW/KM
Date 22 November 2013

Subject  Rotherham EI P: Clarifications

1.0 Introduction
1.1 Further to the Rotherham Core Strategy EI P hearing sessions, as agreed we are pleased to provide further information to supplement the points made by Michael Hepburn, on behalf of Hallam Land Management.

2.0 West Dinnington - Ecology
2.1 The Council has raised concerns over the development of the West Dinnington site, given the sighting of Golden Plover and the potential impact that the development of a western extension to West Dinnington would have from an ecological perspective. We noted at the Hearing, that the Council had not undertaken a similar assessment to the east of Dinnington where the Broad Location for Growth is currently proposed.

2.2 FPCR, on behalf of Hallam, has undertaken a brief assessment of the area to the west of Dinnington, which we attach, and can confirm that:

- The majority of the site is of limited botanical value;
- In relation to lapwing, plover and skylark, whilst further survey work is required, it is considered that due to the amount of similar habitat available in the wider landscape, the site will be of local value only to both species;
- There is scope for bats, amphibians and reptiles, water vole and otter to be present on site, although it will be possible to mitigate any impact on these species through incorporating the existing hedgerows, trees and ponds into the green infrastructure of the site where possible and providing a buffer adjacent to the brook. These features are already incorporated into the indicative Masterplan provided on page 35 of Hallam’s representation to the Rotherham Draft Core Strategy (April 2012) along with scope to create net improvements to habitats and biodiversity.
Proposed changes to Policy CS6

3.1 We note that JVH Town Planning Consultants Ltd has proposed a reworded Policy CS6 (referred to by JVH as Policy SC6). We have reviewed the revised wording and suggest that the wording is amended as follows:

Policy CS6: Meeting the Housing Requirement

3.2 Sufficient land will be allocated in the Sites and Policies DPD to meet as a minimum Rotherham’s housing requirement of 1,160 dwellings per annum or 17,400 for the period from 2013 to 2028 taking into account existing commitments. The following principles will be applied:

a New allocations will be distributed in accordance with the spatial strategy in CS1

b New allocations will be made having regard to the criteria in CS3

Note

3.3 As discussed, during the EIP sessions given the absence of an up to date SHMA the EIP should be adjourned to enable the Council to prepare this crucial piece of evidence properly to establish the objectively assessed need for Rotherham. Should the Inspector decide against this the former RS requirement should be used pending an immediate review of the plan.

3.4 Addressing the shortfall between the actual completions from 2008 to 2013 and the RS target of 1,160 per year [see table 2 of RSD 14] would result in an annual rate of 1,061 dwellings per annum and an overall requirement of 15,917. Over the five years the under provision amounts to 3,167 dwellings.

Position on Housing Undersupply

4.1 We raised concern at the Hearing as to how the Council are dealing with housing undersupply in the Core Strategy. Specifically we consider that Rotherham should assess their undersupply against the housing requirements defined in the Regional Strategy; the Development Plan at the time of the undersupply, rather than the proposed housing requirement figures set out in the draft Core Strategy. At the Hearing we noted that the approach that we are advocating has been recommended by Inspectors in relation to the Ryedale and the West Lancashire Local Plans (please see attached documents). We refer you to paragraphs 46 and 47 of the Ryedale Report and paragraphs 51-53 and 57-58 of the West Lancashire Report.