Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan
Examination – Matter 6 Statement (Housing Allocations in Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell)

Date: September 2020
For: Persimmon Homes (Midlands) Ltd
Issue: Whether the housing allocation at Land West of Rothwell is soundly based

Q1: Are the housing allocations appropriate and justified in light of the potential constraints, infrastructure requirements and adverse impacts?

1.1.1 At the Regulation 19 stage, Persimmon submitted detailed technical evidence in the form of a Site Delivery Statement that outlined the deliverability of the West of Rothwell draft allocation. The Site Delivery Statement was supported by a masterplan that fully addressed the site’s constraints and opportunities. Importantly, this illustrated that a landscape-led development of the site could be accommodated without adverse impacts arising particularly in terms of highway/transport impacts regarding which Persimmon has commissioned further detailed technical evidence in the form of a Transport Feasibility Note (TFN).

1.1.2 The TFN found that the traffic impacts arising from West of Rothwell could be accommodated within the transport network that will be significantly improved as part of the Rothwell North SUE. In relation to Junction 3 of the A14, which is expressly referenced in draft Policy ROT3, the operational capacity of this junction was reviewed as part of previous committed developments and additional impacts upon it can be readily accommodated. This can of course be explored through further assessment at the application stage.

Q2: Are there any significant factors that indicate any sites/parts of the sites should not have been allocated?

No. Kettering Borough Council’s site assessment methodology is robust. It taken has account of relevant constraint and the work here has been supplemented by Persimmon’s own detailed technical evidence submitted at Regulation 19 stage.

Q3: Are the sites viable and deliverable? Is there any risk that site conditions any constraints might prevent development or adversely affect viability and delivery?

1.1.3 As a result of extensive due diligence work in relation to the Rothwell North SUE, Persimmon has a good understanding of sales values, build, infrastructure and other costs and has used this information to undertake a high level appraisal of Land West of Rothwell. This demonstrates that the site is viable with the required 30% affordable housing provision (Rothwell North incorporated policy-compliant affordable housing provision). In terms of other infrastructure items, the site’s close proximity to the Rothwell North SUE will allow the draft allocation to be supported by the infrastructure brought forward as part of this committed scheme. As set out above and in our Regulation 19 Representations, Persimmon has undertaken high-level site assessment work and masterplanning that confirms that the site is fully deliverable.
Q4: How are the site capacities determined? What assumptions have been made? Are these justified?

1.1.4 Persimmon has produced a high-level masterplan for Land West of Rothwell, which was submitted at the Regulation 19 stage. This shows that the site has the capacity to deliver a high quality, landscape-led scheme that meets the requirements of the draft policy and accommodate Rothwell’s housing needs to the end of the JCS plan period.

Q6/7: What benefits would the proposed development bring? What are the potential adverse impacts of developing the site and how might they be mitigated?

1.1.5 The allocation of Land to the West of Rothwell will bring forward market and affordable housing at a policy-compliant level to meet housing needs in the town to the end of the plan period. A range of dwelling types could be incorporated to respond to specific local needs and the development would be delivered in a sustainable location close to the services and facilities in Rothwell itself and those to be brought forward as part of the Rothwell North SUE. As a result, the scheme would offer a wide variety of choice in a relatively short distance and reduce the need to travel by car. The proposed development would also deliver a significant amount of green infrastructure tying into that to be delivered as part of the Rothwell North development providing high quality opportunities for outdoor recreation for new and existing residents.

1.1.6 The potential impacts arising from the development and associated mitigation measures have been identified in the Site Delivery Statement submitted at Regulation 19 stage. This demonstrates that these impacts can be appropriately managed and mitigated without causing material planning harm and further assessment work can be carried out at the planning application stage.

Q9: What is the expected timescale and rate of development and is it realistic?

1.1.7 According to the October 2019 Housing Land Supply: Background Paper [HOU 1] the Council projects 50 completions in 2025/26 followed by 100 homes a year thereafter. As discussed in our Regulation 19 representations, circa 100 completions per year is realistic given Persimmon’s performance elsewhere in the Borough such as at Kettering East. We also consider the overall timing of delivery to be accurate and to tie in with our build programme for the Rothwell North SUE. There is adequate “headroom” within the projections (two monitoring years) to allow for some slippage before the end date of the JCS, which lends further confidence the numbers on this site will be delivered within the current plan period.

Q12: What relationship does this site have to the adjacent SUE? Is criterion h relating to the strategic link road justified by the evidence? What role does the site play in terms of Green Infrastructure?

1.1.8 The Rothwell North SUE benefits from outline planning permission. As part of the S106 agreement attached to this planning permission (and a Deed of Variation thereto), Persimmon has committed to bringing the Strategic Link Road (SLR) into operation prior to the 150th occupation at Rothwell North or three years from completion of the deed of variation, whichever is the sooner. Given Rothwell North’s phasing and that fact Reserved Matters Approval has already been granted for 227 dwellings at Rothwell North, it is not remotely plausible for Land West of Rothwell to come forward ahead of the SLR given that delivery of the latter will come about as part of the SUE commitment. Provision h) of draft Policy ROT3 is therefore superfluous.
In relation to Green Infrastructure (GI), we would direct the Inspector’s attention to Figure 17 of the JCS that identifies both sub-regional and local GI corridors across North Northamptonshire. This shows the Rothwell (Triangular Lodge) to Wicksteed Park local GI corridor running to the west of Rothwell. It is recognised in Policy 19 of the JCS relating to the delivery of GI as well as the policy’s supporting text that new development in North Northamptonshire will contribute to enhancing the GI network. This high-level information has been extrapolated into Policy 38 of the JCS, which allocates Rothwell North for development and identifies as part of that allocation a green infrastructure corridor running along the western and northern fringes of Rothwell North (see Figure 28). The corridor also extends to the south beyond the southern boundary of the Rothwell North SUE and into Land West of Rothwell. Draft policy ROT3 requires delivery of this GI link along the western boundary of Land West of Rothwell and requirement has been reflected in the masterplanning of the site, demonstrating connectivity with the GI corridor directly to the north that will be brought forward as part of the Rothwell North SUE. Continuing the GI link to the south as identified in the JCS will only be possible through enabling development at Land West of Rothwell.