

Milton Keynes Council Response to AP13 of Action Points arising from Stage One Plan:MK Examination Hearing Discussions (MK/EXAM/015)

AP13 requested: *Clarity on the delivery strategy for Tickford Fields and update on capacity. Should the 1200 figure in the NP be reduced in light of emerging technical work?*

During discussions on Matter 3: Overall need and requirement for housing (Part 2 – Issue 5: Housing Land Supply) at the Plan:MK Examination hearing session held on Thursday 12 July 2018, clarity was requested on the delivery of the Tickford Fields site in Newport Pagnell following comments made by DLP Planning Ltd (DLP).

As background, the Tickford Fields site in Newport Pagnell is an allocation for 1200 dwellings which was made in the Newport Pagnell Neighbourhood Plan (2016). The housing trajectory submitted as Appendix B to Milton Keynes Council's (MKC) Matter 3 Statement with a base date of 1 April 2018, set out the projected delivery for the 1,200 dwellings on this site.

The site was partially owned by MKC (now fully owned as outlined below) and DLP, via Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP), have been instructed to prepare an Outline application for development of the site. Beyond the preparation of an outline application, DLP are not involved with, and have no further role in, the delivery of the site.

Whilst DLP are preparing an outline application for this site on behalf of MKC, they were not representing MKC at the Plan:MK Examination in Public Hearings. Whilst MKC acknowledges that the work carried out by DLP in preparing an outline application has provided a more detailed analysis of the site, which has resulted in a proposed decrease in the capacity of the site, the information which was verbally presented by DLP at the Hearings session was incorrect in relation to the number of dwellings which could be accommodated and, with regards to the timings for delivery of the site, was based on their own assumptions and not on any knowledge of MKC's proposed disposal/delivery programme for the site. This is confirmed by DLP within the attached letter.

Following further correspondence with DLP, as attached, they have confirmed that following the completion of the master plan exercise for the site, the proposed likely yield of the site would be 930 residential units. With this in mind, MKC proposes to amend the Housing Trajectory submitted to account for this decrease in the number of homes.

With regards to the expected delivery of the site, the Council on 12th June formally approved the purchase of a further area of the site so as to secure overall control of the development site which means a comprehensive development can be brought forward in accordance with the made Neighbourhood Plan. MKC's Property Team has confirmed that this land has now been acquired.

Time was needed to negotiate and agree this purchase which has put delivery timescales back a little. Nevertheless this substantial purchase indicates the Council is committed to

delivering the development and with the entire site now under the control of the Council it is expected that its delivery can be brought forward in good time, starting with an outline application for the whole site being submitted in November 2018.

With this delay in mind, but giving consideration to site now being under the sole ownership of the Council, it is felt that the projected delivery of the site should be moved back 1 year from that proposed in the housing trajectory submitted as Appendix B to Milton Keynes Council's (MKC) Matter 3 Statement. This would reflect Outline permission being granted in early 2019, start on site in 2020/21 and first completions being seen at the end of 2020/21. By 2021/22 delivery rates would reach 100 dpa and continue at this rate until completion, which would occur within the plan period.

The changes outlined above with regards to the capacity and the delivery trajectory of the site will be accommodated within the final housing trajectory which will be included within the adopted Plan:MK.

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Dear Tim

Re: Plan MK Examination in Public – Submissions Made to EiP Involving Tickford Fields Farm, Milton Keynes

I write further to our recent email exchange and discussions vis-à-vis the above.

As outlined to you, based upon the general representations made in respect of a number of matters we were invited to attend the EiP to make further representations on a range of specific matters as defined by the Inspector. These, by and large, relate to overarching considerations such as housing requirements and supply and within this to build rates and delivery trajectories.

At the Hearings dealing with both overall housing needs and supply the appearances were shared by Roland Bolton and Rob Back, who both, separately, contributed to the wide-ranging discussions over the set days, along with many other consultants, lawyers and others representing various interests. During the discussions, and these were wide ranging and involved numerous parties not just DLP, reference was made to a series of sites and their potential yield over the Plan period. You have seen the general notes we have produced on this. It has also been extensively raised, and is a matter that the Inspector invited, that the Council's published build trajectories are considered to 'overestimate' capacities and build rates and these were challenged by a number of parties.

It is also the case that this matter was also generally addressed in the detailed evidence given in the summer of 2017/early 2018 in a series of Section 78 planning appeals for a number of sites in the MKC area that DLP became involved with.

At these appeals, which were all heard via public local inquiry, the position put by Milton Keynes Council was challenged. In respect of Tickford Fields Farm, which was listed in a technical appendix and was not specifically referred to in written evidence, the Council's position was that this would produce overall 1200 residential units and that this was likely to be built out within the five-year period. Our submissions dealt generally with the matters of need and supply and also development trajectories, and the details were then fleshed out in both the 'housing round table', as led by the Inspector and via cross examination of evidence.

In this discussion the Council led on build rates and there were a series of questions from both parties over the respective positions. So far as Tickford was concerned the Council maintained the position that 1200 would be achieved on the site, and there was some discussion flowing from this in relation to ownerships and capacities, and Mark Harris fed into this at the time.

Roland Bolton was questioned on his position which was, at that time, that the site was in two ownerships and a master planning exercise was being undertaken to inform a planning application and EIA and that arising from this it was unlikely that 1200 dwellings could be achieved. I recall also that we, during that forum, ventured that a figure of circa 850 was potentially likely to be the output from the site but also that this would depend on the master planning and resolution of ownership issues.

Our main issue was with the yield in the 5 year period from 2016 which of course is not relevant here, albeit I understand that development timing has also now been raised. In my assessment, and given an application by the end of 2018, it is unlikely that development would commence until at least Q1 of 2020, and with first completions Q2/3 of 2020, this providing for an expedited sale and also an early commencement of discharge of conditions and enabling works. More likely however, would be a Q3/4 2020 start with first completions Q1/2 2021. This however is a generalised assessment only.

The submissions made in the context of the presently ongoing EiP have been by reference to the evidence provided to the various PLI's, as was tested at that time and is a matter of public record, and I would emphasise that this was in relation to yield trajectories generally and were on a site by site assessment of the position as existed at that time. There was not I recall from the appeals any contradictory position put by the Council other than a reference to the neighbourhood plan expectations and an acceptance that this was a nominal figure for the purposes of allocation rather than a specific planning case. I make no criticism of this as it is correct in that context, as was ours on the basis of the work undertaken and known.

It should be noted also that at the time the evidence was given the master plan exercise had not been concluded and there were still a number of elements that were being assessed and that this was based on a consideration of factors including, for example, the extent of flood risk areas. Further the land ownership issue had not been resolved and the position now, at this advance stage is that the site, subject to final agreement on technical matters would likely yield 930 residential units

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon James'.

Simon James MRTPI MIEMA
Managing Director