



South Downs National Park Local Plan – Examination
in Public

Position Statement

On behalf of
Metis Homes

October 2018



Introduction

- 1.1. These comments are made on behalf of Metis Homes, who control land at Long Priors, West Meon. The land is allocated for between 10 and 12 dwellings in Policy SD96 of the Draft Plan. This land is also included in the proposed settlement policy boundary for West Meon.

Comments by Nova Planning Limited on behalf of Metis Homes.

Comments on Matter 4 – Overall Housing Need and Supply

- 1.2. We have no comments to make in respect of 4(a) – (b) & 4(e) – (h).

Matter 4(c) - Is the choice of housing sites allocated in the Plan justified by robust evidence and selection methodology?

- 1.3. The Sites and Settlements Background Paper (2017) provides a clear and detailed account of the site selection process, which have been carried out in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Park Purposes in the first instance.
- 1.4. The comparative merits of individual sites have been further refined through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HA), which provide a more detailed assessment of site constraints.
- 1.5. This process has led to the identification of individual allocations in the Plan, including the allocation of our client's land under Policy SD96.
- 1.6. Of the sites promoted in West Meon and therefore 'available' in the context of the NPPF (paragraph 67), our client's land is clearly the least constrained and most suitable location for residential development in the village; and this is reflected in the findings of the accompanying assessment work.

- 1.7. The site has subsequently been assessed through the various iterations of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and found to have 'no significant effects' in the SA (April 2018). The Council based this conclusion on 'uncertain effects' in relation to landscape impact and access. However, Metis Homes has commissioned technical work to clarify these matters and to support the allocation. This additional technical work was submitted as part of the site's promotion through the SHLAA. In summary, here are the findings in relation to both issues.

Landscape – an initial landscape appraisal has been undertaken by the Terra Firma Consultancy and this includes advice on 1) suitable boundary planting; and 2) a landscape-led approach to the layout and design of the allocated housing. Therefore, the strategic landscape issues that are relevant to the site's allocation have been considered and a development will be brought forward in accordance with the recommendations of the appraisal without resulting in any significant landscape impacts.

Access – an initial access proposal and accompanying Road Safety Audit has been prepared by a Highways Consultant, D M Mason and this information has been discussed with the Highway Authority, Hampshire County Council (HCC). HCC have confirmed in writing that the submitted proposals are acceptable. Therefore, both matters have moved on since the 2018 SA and the position is positive and not uncertain as the SA suggests.

Matter 4(d) – Is the distribution and amount of housing sites between settlements justified by robust evidence?

- 1.8 Alongside the assessment of site constraints as referenced above, a Settlement Facilities Assessment (2015) has been undertaken which ranks settlements in accordance with service provision and accessibility, with key indicators for education, retail, transport, health and other facilities. This assessment has been used to identify which settlements have capacity to accommodate housing and employment growth.
- 1.9 West Meon is a sustainable location for growth as it provides all of the facilities and services required for day-to-day living. These include a post office, butchers, doctors' surgery and pub. West Meon also is also served by sustainable transport links to a broader range of amenities in Petersfield and Winchester.

- 1.10 The land allocated under SD96 lies in close proximity to existing facilities/amenities and as such it is a sustainable location for development.

Conclusions

- 1.11 In conclusion, Metis Homes consider the overall spatial strategy to be sound and the plan accords with national planning policy in this respect. As outlined above, West Meon is a sustainable location for housing given the existing facilities and services found in the village. The site is both deliverable and achievable in accordance with the NPPF – 1) it is adjoined by existing residential development and forms a logical extension of the existing pattern of development on the settlement edge; 2) It is well related to existing facilities and amenities in the village; 3) the site has no insurmountable constraints which would prevent its development for housing; and 4) its delivery is not complicated by land ownership issues. As such, the site satisfies all of the requirements as outlined in the NPPF methodology and it represents a suitable site for housing.
- 1.12 Metis Homes firmly support the allocation of this site for a residential development and they are committed to bringing forward a high-quality scheme that will contribute positively to the built and natural environment in the National Park.