



Statement of Common Ground

Between the Landowners (West Sussex County Council and The Cowdray Estate) and the South Downs National Park Authority

In relation to:

West Sussex County Council Depot and former Brickworks site, Midhurst

November 2018



Introduction

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to identify the areas of agreement of common ground between West Sussex County Council and the Cowdray Estate (hereafter referred to as 'the Landowners') and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). It covers matters raised by Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) and Pro Vision (PV) in previous representations on behalf of landowners in relation to Local Plan policies and the Development Brief accompanying Policy SD81. The matters of Common Ground are without prejudice to the landowners' position in respect of the status of Development Brief accompanying the proposed allocation.

Context

The site is allocated for residential-led development under Local Plan policy SD81, with reference within the policy to an accompanying Development Brief. Previous representations have been made by LSH and PV on behalf of the Landowners. The LSH representations raised concerns relating to the specific requirements of policy SD27 (housing mix) and policy SD28 (affordable housing) in the Draft Local Plan, alongside separate comments in relation to the site allocation under policy SD81 and the accompanying Development Brief. The concerns expressed in relation to policies SD27 and SD28 were intended to focus on the disparity between the strategies being adopted by SDNPA and neighbouring authorities in the same housing market area. These representations were not intended as fundamental objections to the soundness and legal compliance of the Local Plan as a whole and will be considered through the examination as a matter of course.

The landowners are supportive of the Local Plan and the allocation of their land in policy SD81. They are committed to working collaboratively alongside the SDNPA to deliver a high quality development in accordance with the policies contained within the Local Plan and having regard to the aspirations of the accompanying Development Brief.

A meeting between SDNPA officers and agents representing the respective landowners, to discuss the development brief, took place on 18th April 2018.

Areas of Common Ground regarding Policy SD81

There is agreement between the Landowners and the SDNPA in respect of the following matters some of which were formerly objected to by the Landowners:

- (a) Site Capacity – Policy SD81 refers to “development for between approximately 65 – 90 dwellings”, which provides sufficient flexibility to respond to site constraints, and the retention/relocation of the Household Recycling Facility ensuring an equivalent standard and capacity of provision;
- (b) Concept Plan – The Concept Plan no longer forms part of the allocation and is not referenced in Policy SD81;
- (c) Relocation/Retention of the Household Recycling facility – WSCC intend on retaining a Household Recycling facility to serve the population of Midhurst and therefore at this stage it is anticipated that the existing facility will either be retained in its current form or relocated elsewhere in the allocated site. SD81(e) makes provision for potential retention/relocation in any event.

Areas of Disagreement

The only matter of disagreement relates to the status of the Development Brief accompanying policy SD81.

Landowners' position

If the Development Brief is not before the Inspector for consideration as part of the Local Plan Examination then it should not be referenced in the Local Plan itself. Furthermore, despite being directly referenced in Section 3 of Policy SD81, the document has not been through the requisite stages of public consultation in accordance with the Local Plan Regulations 2012. Therefore, it is the Landowners' position that Section 3 of Policy SD81 should be removed on this basis.

SDNPA position

The development brief is based upon the emerging Local Plan policy context for the site, includes site specific analysis, sets out the Authority's approach to contextual analysis and landscape led design and sets out the key principles that should be observed in any development on the site against the backdrop of the relevant Local Plan policies. A draft version of the brief was consulted on in March/April 2018, and 20 organisations and individuals commented on it, including West Sussex County Council as landowner and Cowdray Estate. Some minor changes were made to the brief as a result. SDNPA considers the brief provides a positive framework which will ensure effective joint working between the landowners and SDNPA as proposals are worked up, and is sufficiently flexible to allow matters of detail to be dealt with through the planning application process.

On behalf of Landowners:



Planning Agent

03 December 2018

On behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority:



Planning Policy Manager

28 November 2018