



**WELWYN
HATFIELD**

**Joint Examination of the
Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2013-2032
and the
East Herts District Plan 2011-2033**

Birchall Garden Suburb/East of Welwyn Garden

Examination Hearing Statements

Matters and Issues

Matter 11 - Implementation

Matter 11 – Implementation

A large part of the site is covered with historic landfill whose remediation does not appear to be complete. Parts of the site are underlain with strategically important minerals that should be extracted before development commences above them.

Issues

54) Is the site realistically likely to deliver over 2,500 dwellings within the plan period?

Response

- a) It is realistic that the site's full capacity will be delivered over the plan period of Welwyn Hatfield (currently proposed to run to 2031/32 but to be extended to 2032/2033) and East Herts (running to 2032/33). The site owner has previously advised that 1,200 dwellings could be delivered in Welwyn Hatfield by 2031/32 and 1,350 dwellings within East Herts by 2032/33.
- b) The delivery of the site by the end of the plan period is based on the following assumptions:
 - Permission being secured for a separate minerals application during early 2019
 - Outline planning permission being secured during early 2019 for the proposed development scheme
 - Award of reserved matters permissions from 2019 onwards
 - 4 housing construction and delivery phases across the scheme at one time, each with a capacity of 50 – 75 dwellings per annum
- c) The site promoter has indicated they will be able to submit the relevant planning applications within this time period.
- d) The proposed mineral extraction is expected to take approximately 6 months. Subsequent restoration and development will follow. However, given the size of the site, mineral extraction could be occurring on the specified area at the same time that initial service infrastructure and residential development is being constructed elsewhere within the site. This will be agreed through the masterplanning process and set out in a phasing plan accompanying the application. The delivery of new homes on the East Herts portion of the site is not expected until year 2/3 of the Plan period. Assuming a start date of early 2020, it is anticipated that 220 homes could be delivered up to 2021/22 within the East Herts part of the site. Therefore there is no anticipated delay to the implementation of development at this site.

55) What are the implications if one part of the allocation is found to be unsound?

Response

- a) Birchall Garden Suburb has been promoted as a comprehensive scheme comprising two areas of residential-led development either side of a large area of parkland. The answer to the question depends on which part of the allocation is judged as unsound.

- b) If the southern part of the site falling within Welwyn Hatfield was found to be unsound then the northern part of the site falling within East Herts could still come forward for development. However if the northern part of the site within East Herts was found to be unsound then this could jeopardise the southern part of the site coming forward. Whilst the two separate parts broadly meet their own primary education needs, the development is reliant upon new secondary education capacity being provided within the East Herts portion of development.

- c) Unless the secondary school could be delivered on another suitable site elsewhere then this would leave a substantial shortfall in secondary education provision. This would threaten the delivery of the southern portion of the site as well as other development planned in Welwyn Garden City which relies upon additional secondary school capacity being delivered at Birchall Garden Suburb.