Examination of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan

Council's Statement - Stage 8 Hearing session

Northern Settlements

Settlement: Woolmer Green

Policy Number: SADM27

Site References: HS15 (WGr1)

Matter number: 2

Issues: Environmental Considerations, Surface Water, Flood Risk, Foul Drainage

Question Numbers: Q9-15

WELWYN HATFIELD

Policy SADM 27 Woolmer Green - Site HS15 (WGr1), Land east of London Road

9) How would the surface water at this site be managed?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

a) The Flood Risk Sequential and Exception Test document 2016 (Examination Library reference **ENV/13** and **ENV13a**) notes that surface water flow route runs north-south in the eastern area of the site, and ponds in the southern corner of the site. Policy SADM14 sets out the requirements for surface water management. A sequential approach to layout, avoiding the areas of highest surface water risk in the south-western corner, and the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be used to suitably manage surface water flood risk to, within and from the site. No specific requirements have been requested by the Environment Agency or the Local Lead Flood Management Authority, but a Flood Risk Assessment with a Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required at the planning application stage to demonstrate the above.

10) Has a flood risk assessment been carried out?

11) Are there any on or off-site ramifications for flood risk that would result from the implementation of the proposed development?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

a) A combined response is provided to questions 10 and 11.

b) Yes, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Examination Library reference **ENV/10**) indicated has been carried out in accordance to paragraph 100 of the NPPF (2012). The Council has worked with both the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority throughout the assessment of site suitability. In addition the site promoter has carried out a Flood Risk Assessment which was submitted as part of their Regulation 19 submission (**dlpps582**).

c) Stage 2 of the Council's Site Selection process takes a number of issues into account when assessing physical or environmental constraints affecting the suitability of a site, of which flood risk is one. The assessment considered whether the majority of the site is subject to significant fluvial or surface water flood risk, considering the vulnerability of the proposed use, and whether flood risk could be mitigated and managed to an acceptable level.

d) The Level 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2016 (**ENV/10**) indicated that 100% of this site located within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. This site was not subject to a site-specific Level 2 SFRA assessment as the site is not located in Flood Zones 2/3, it does not have an ordinary watercourse running through or adjacent to the site and the surface water risk was not deemed to be significant.

e) It is considered that this site passes the Sequential Test and this site is considered an appropriate location for development under NPPF flood risk policy as development would be sited only on land in Flood Zone 1 and there would be no onsite or off-site ramifications for flood risk which would result from the implementation of the proposed development of this site.

12) Would the site's development require a balancing pond?

13) If so how extensive would this be and where would it be located?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

a) A combined response is provided to questions 12 and 13.

b) No, the Council has not been advised that a balancing pond would be required as part of the sustainable drainage system for this site. As explained above, it is considered that a sequential approach to layout and the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) could be used to suitably manage surface water flood risk to, within and from the site. The representation submitted by the site promoter in 2016 (Regulation 19 representation) **dlpps582** included a Flood Risk Assessment of the site conducted by consultants Abington Consulting Engineers, and provided an indicative drainage strategy for the site. Section 9 of this assessment outlines the potential flood risk management measures considered for this development and explains that the development could utilise domestic soakaways, permeable paving, swales running parallel to roads. The strategy does not propose any balance ponds as part of the SuDS for the site.

c) It is considered that development on this site would come forward in line with Policy SADM 14 'Flood Risk and Surface Water Management' and the SuDS measures to be provided would be considered at planning application stage for their suitability.

14) How would foul drainage be dealt with?

15) Are there any foul drainage constraints that would impede the implementation of any development?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

a) A combined response is provided to questions 14 and 15.

b) WHBC has worked with Thames Water, as the sewerage undertaker, and Thames Water's consultant Savills, to understand the requirements of this site in terms of sewerage capacity.

c) The site is served by Rye Meads STW. In 2016 Thames Water advised that upgrades to the existing drainage infrastructure are likely to be required to ensure sufficient capacity is brought forward ahead of the development. The Council was

also advised upgrades to the existing drainage infrastructure could take 18 months – 3 years to design and deliver. The Council therefore estimated the delivery timescales for this site to be 1-5/6-10 years in the plan period.

d) The site promoter provided additional evidence in support of the proposed allocation which included a Sewer Impact Study by Thames Water (2016). This study was submitted in support of the allocation in **dlpps582** (Regulation 19 representation) and indicated that no improvements to the existing sewer network would be required. Thames Water have advised the Council that such pre-development advise is only considered relevant for up to 12 months, and therefore it is considered that the Council's estimate of delivery timescales for this site of 1-5/6-10 years in the plan period is appropriate.

e) The Council do not envisage that the delivery of the necessary infrastructure would impede the implementation of any development beyond the estimated delivery timescale.