

Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Examination

Matter PM1B Five Year Housing Land Supply and Joint Trajectory

Written Statement by Boyer on behalf of RLW Estates (Respondent 1284)

PM1B.1: The Framework (paragraph 47) states, amongst other things, that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements. Planning Policy Guidance Ref 010 2a-010-20140306 advises: Where there is a joint plan, housing requirements and the need to identify a five year supply of sites can apply across the joint plan area. The approach being taken should be set out clearly in the plan.

Are there any local circumstances which justify the use of a joint trajectory without a joint plan? If so what are they?

- 1.1 Given the closely inter-related nature of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire in physical and functional terms, including travel to work and housing market, there is some logic to a joined up approach to planning for the area and in turn the preparation of a joint trajectory.
- 1.2 The rationale for the approach adopted is understood in respect of enabling the phasing of sites across the two districts in a manner which will deliver sustainable patterns of development, whilst allowing demonstration of a continuous supply of housing, including a deliverable five year housing land supply in the short-term, given the strategic nature of many of the sites in South Cambridgeshire in particular.
- 1.3 It is therefore considered that the local circumstances pertaining to this functional and geographic relationship, the tightly defined boundary of the City with its associated sensitivities as a compact, historic city surrounded by Green Belt and in turn by South Cambridgeshire itself, do support the use of a joint trajectory. However it is evident that this is not necessarily explicitly in accordance with the relevant passages of the Planning Practice Guidance, given the absence of a joint Local Plan at this stage (notwithstanding the intention to progress one in the near future).
- 1.4 Furthermore it is considered that, following the proposed removal of restrictions to the commencement of development at the strategic sites at Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield, there is scope for the earlier delivery from these sources than had originally been allowed for. In this regard substantial progress has been made towards submission of initial planning applications at Waterbeach new town in the short-term that will facilitate this.

PM1B.2: Will the use of a joint trajectory assist in meeting the objectives of the Framework, including the delivery of sustainable development and boosting, significantly, the supply of land for housing?

- 2.1 It is considered that the joint trajectory will assist in meeting the key objectives of the NPPF. Certainly it can be seen that by enabling a joined up approach across both districts this facilitates identification of the most sustainable patterns of development as reflected within the defined development sequence. Whilst there are numerous objectives of the Framework, including the twelve “core planning principles” it should be remembered that the overriding objective, termed as the “Golden Thread” running through plan-making and decision-taking, and lying at the heart of the NPPF, is the pursuit and presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 2.2 The approach adopted does specifically allow South Cambridgeshire in particular to avoid needing to identify sites in less sustainable locations, such as significant dispersed growth in the rural areas, solely based on the need for additional short-term supply.
- 2.3 Although it may be considered that the joint trajectory does not directly boost the supply of housing, it should be seen that in supporting the allocation of major strategic sites, this approach will in fact contribute significantly to the supply of housing at a substantial scale for many years to come.
- 2.4 As noted above, it is considered that development at Waterbeach can achieve early delivery, albeit that the Council has adopted a more cautious approach in respect of the numbers relied upon within the plan period and their anticipated delivery timescales.

PM1B.3: Is it clear how this approach would work in practice; i.e how would the five year land supply be calculated and updated; and is it clear how any failure to provide a five year supply would be resolved?

- 3.1 No comment

PM1B.4: The Memorandum of Understanding (RD/Strat/350) indicated that, as part of the City Deal arrangements, the Councils have agreed to prepare a joint Local Plan and Transport Strategy starting in 2019. Should this commitment be expressly included in the Local Plans?

- 4.1 It is considered that the commitment to prepare these joint documents from 2019 onwards should be explicitly set out in the Local Plans in order to reinforce this intention and to provide greater certainty that this will be delivered. Whilst the relevant actions to implement this are something that will be progressed in the future it is clear that this is relevant to the planning environment within which these current plans are being finalised, given that this will take place relatively early on in relation to the intended adoption of the plans currently at examination.