

Carlisle District Local Plan Examination

Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs)

Matter 3:

Housing Sites Allocated within Policy HO 1

Statement by Carlisle City Council

November 2015



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Issue 1:

Q1: Will the Local Plan be effective in securing the delivery of development of the scale and nature anticipated in the Housing Site Selection document (SD 015), given the sparse and limited information provided in Appendix 1?

1.1 The Housing Site Selection document [SD 015] aims to set out the considerations that were taken into account when making housing allocations in the Plan. It also contains a portfolio of sites, drawing attention to any particular issues, and setting out a brief summary of the site. Attention is drawn to this document in the justification to Policy HO 1, in paragraph 5.1 of the Plan.

1.2 Appendix 1 of the Plan is a much briefer description of the sites, which is primarily intended to aid identification of the sites, and set out some of the main issues associated with them. The Appendix makes it clear that it is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every matter to be considered. It was considered that to use the Site Selection document as an appendix would make the Plan unnecessarily long. The Council contends that the site selection process has been rigorous and robust, and has sought to bring to light any potential constraints or show stoppers.

1.3 The Appendix states that anyone considering submitting a planning application is encouraged to undertake early discussions with the Council's Development Management Team. The Council actively encourages pre-application discussions on all types of applications, with no limit on the number of discussions or meetings. The pre-application process aims to provide the prospective applicant with information and advice in order to be able to make an application, and to fully address any issues that may arise from a site. Likely conditions will also be explored. The Council does not make a charge for this service. In conclusion it is considered that the Plan will be effective, which is in part demonstrated by the number of applications received to date on allocated sites (as set out in Table 2.1).

Q2. The Housing Site Selection document (SD015) under the heading 'biodiversity' highlights the proximity of some sites to tributaries that discharge into SACs and SPAs. What assessments have been carried out to ensure that

any adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated against and will not be a constraint to the development of these sites?

1.4 The Housing Site Selection document [SD 015] site templates have a brief section on biodiversity which aims to draw attention to any local, national or international designations which apply either directly to the site, or which are in such a location that the development of the site would need to take account of the designation. Other non-designated biodiversity features are also noted, such as trees and hedgerows, and the presence of tree preservation orders is noted in the section headed 'Other Constraints'.

1.5 The River Eden Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is the only SAC within the urban area of Carlisle and crosses the City from east to west before discharging into the Solway Firth (Ramsar, SPA, SAC) on the western boundary of the District. As such, some of the housing allocations are in proximity to a watercourse which will discharge into a tributary of the network of rivers which make up the River Eden SAC.

1.6 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) [SD 005] lists in Table 2 (Policies requiring further explanation before being screened out, or where mitigation measures are proposed) those allocations requiring further assessment due either to their location directly adjacent to the River Eden, or directly adjacent to a tributary of the River Eden. Each site is then subject to an assessment setting out the potential impacts on the European Site, or whether there are unlikely to be any impacts. This is addressed by way of description of the location of the site in relation to the SAC, whether planning permission has been granted for the site and hence the biodiversity impacts addressed through that route, and the results of any ongoing discussions with relevant bodies such as United Utilities or the Environment Agency.

1.7 With regard to proposed mitigation or the screening out of the policy, this is recorded in column three of the table. The mitigation measures proposed together with the provisions of a range of policies in the Local Plan are considered to minimise the risk of a likely significant effect on the River Eden SAC. Therefore it is considered that adequate assessments have been carried out to ensure that any potential adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated against, and will therefore not be a constraint to the development of these sites.

Issue 2:

Q1. Is the selection of sites for inclusion in the LP justified having regard to the supporting evidence base, in particular the Sustainability Appraisal?

2.1 The Council considers that the selection of sites included within the Plan are justified having regard to the supporting evidence base, including; the Housing Site Selection Document [SD 015]; the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update [EB 005]; Rural Masterplanning [EB 029] and the Sustainability Appraisal [SD 003].

2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Report [SD 003] at paragraph 4.59 clearly states that the process of SA has played an important role in the evaluation of and decision-making around the selection of sites. The SA Report at paragraph 4.60 explains the process used to assess sites against the SA framework whilst also enabling a clear comparison between sites in terms of their overall sustainability. The outcomes of the SA assessment of sites (contained within Appendix 8 of SD 003) and details of each site (contained within the Site Selection Document SD 015) were used in combination to create a series of summaries, split into housing market areas (Table 12 of SD 003). This process was extremely valuable in contributing to the justification of sites for inclusion in the Local Plan and conversely for highlighting reasons for the rejection of reasonable alternatives.

2.3 With regards to specific sites, the most responses at Regulation 19 to the SA were regarding site allocation R 15. The Council considers that the most appropriate forum for discussion of matters relating to site R 15, and the adjacent land to the north, is the hearing session. The Council has produced a Statement of Common Ground relating to this site [EL1.005b).

Q2. Having regard to the representations made pursuant to regulation 20 in relation to Policy HO1 and omission sites, are there any corrections required to the Sustainability Assessment and if so, would those corrections change the assessments made to the selection of sites for allocation?

2.4 A number of representations were made pursuant to regulation 20 in relation to Policy HO1 and also the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report [SD 003] in its assessment of site allocations for housing. In some cases, representations allude to discontent with the SA outcomes for specific sites. It is made clear within the SA Report [SD 003] that the SA helps to inform the Local Plan but does not itself dictate site selection. It states that sites are selected for allocation based on a number of sources, acknowledging that whilst a site may not be the most sustainable in terms of the outcomes of a SA assessment, there may be other overriding factors that lead to a site being taken forward within the Plan. Clear reasoning to support site selection and the rejection of sites is set out within the SA.

2.5 Page 93 of the Sustainability Appraisal Report [SD 003] summarises the main impacts of site allocations and comments that in some cases potential effects are uncertain, however the cumulative effect of all of the policies in the Plan would afford protection against any negative effects through the planning application process. The SA Report [SD 003] also states that some of the mitigation measures identified through the SA in relation to any uncertainties identified, were not necessarily appropriate for consideration under the SA assessment, but will instead be taken into account at the planning application stage when sites come forward for development.

2.6 It is therefore considered that some of the concerns raised with regards to site allocations may be alleviated through the planning application process, for example the detailed design and layout of a development at a planning application stage may help in reducing concerns with regards to the residential amenity of existing residents.

2.7 Additionally, the Council acknowledges that there were a small number of wholly new sites submitted through the process of consultation at Regulation 20. Whilst an initial and proportionate screening of these sites has been carried out, they have not been subject to full sustainability appraisal or any other assessments. This is due to the Council considering that it has reached a position whereby it has identified an appropriate quantum of development sites within the Plan in appropriate locations across the District. None of the sites put forward at this late stage lead the Council to believe that they offer a better alternative to those proposed within the Plan.

2.8 It is therefore not considered that there are any corrections required to the Sustainability Assessment.

Q3. Notwithstanding the comments of the Inspector in 2008, do sites U1 and U2 (land to the south east of Junction 44 of the M6, Carlisle) remain viable in light of the significant infrastructure works required to create access off the A7 / C1022 signalised junction and potential contributions to facilitate primary school places? What viability assessments have been carried out?

2.9 Outline planning permission was granted in September 2015 under application 14/0761 for the erection of up to 190 houses on site U1. When the planning application was submitted, Story Homes indicated in the submission that subject to full planning permission being in place, they intend to start delivering houses on the site early in the Plan period.

2.10 Access to the site will necessitate a fourth signalised arm to the existing signalised Kingstown Road/Parkhouse Road junction. The access has been designed to accommodate the overall expected housing yield from the application site and the land to the east (U2). The Highways Authority are satisfied with this arrangement. In addition they have requested that the developer should make a financial contribution (£25 000) towards the improvement of California Way and the public right of way network in the vicinity of the site. This would ensure that a safe off road route is available to access this site.

2.11 With regards to education contribution from this development, additional school places are required for primary aged children, as none of the schools which are accessible to this development can be expanded further. A new primary school would therefore need to be provided in north Carlisle. This has, however, been known for some time, and all relevant parties are working together to deliver the optimum solution to the matter.

2.12 The Education Authority considers that the minimum size for a single form entry new primary school is 210 places with a maintained nursery. They have undertaken additional work and derived that the indicative cost per pupil would be £16 667.

2.13 With respect to the City Council owned site U2, the indicative plans for 14/0761 show future vehicle and pedestrian links through to this site. The following condition is attached to the permission:

“Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, the applicant shall submit a plan and/or programme for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority which shows the proposed phasing of the development . That phasing plan shall include:

- 1. the construction to base course standard of the roads and footways including those up to the common boundary with the adjoining land to the east;*
- 2. the provision of open spaces/informal play areas;*
- 3. the provision of the SUDS ponds.*

The development shall thereafter proceed only in accordance with the approved phasing plan and/or programme or such variation to that plan and/or programme as may subsequently be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: *To ensure that the site is developed in a co-ordinated manner and to ensure that vehicular and pedestrian connectivity is provided to the land to the east, which is allocated for residential development in the Carlisle District Local Plan 2015-2030 Proposed Submission Draft”.*

2.14 The City Council has been in ongoing dialogue with Story Homes Ltd regarding the development of the City Council land Site U2, with the site being listed in the Council’s Disposals Programme.

Q4. What is the outcome of the planning applications on the following allocated sites?

- (a) Site U1 (planning application ref: 14/0761 for 190 units);**
- (b) Site U5 (planning application ref: 13/0983 for 189 units);**
- (c) Site U10 (planning application ref: 14/0778 for 277 units);**

2.15 The outcomes are:

Site U1 (planning application ref: 14/0761 for 190 units): granted 17 September 2015

Site U5 (planning application ref: 13/0983 for 189 units): granted 29 September 2015

Site U10 (planning application ref: 14/0778 for 277 units): expected to be determined at the Council's Development Control Committee on 27 November 2015.

Q5. Are the lower yields reflected in planning applications on sites U5 and U10 an indication that the Council is being over optimistic in assessing the yield of sites?

2.16 The yields in the plan are indicative however the lower numbers in the planning applications for U 5 and U10 are because the applications do not cover the full allocated site area. The remaining areas are capable of being delivered in isolation.

Q6. Have any other planning applications been submitted on allocated sites and what is the outcome / expected date for determination?

2.17 The following allocations have been, or are subject to, a planning application:

Table 2.1

Ref	Location	Policy HO 1 Indicative Yield	Application Ref	Applicati on Yield	Outcome/expected date for determination
U8	Land North of Burgh Road	66	15/0621	66	Determined: awaiting execution of S106
U12	Rear of Border Terrier, Ashness Drive/ Ellesmere Way	18	14/0975	18	Granted 16 January 2015 [RP – Affordable]
U14	Land north of Carleton Clinic	126	15/0918	189	Expected to be determined at committee on 27 November 2015
U15	Former Dairy site, Holywell Crescent	66	13/0655	66	Determined 26 March 2014
U17	Land SW of Cummersdale Grange Farm	60	15/0924	60	Expected to be determined at committee on 27

Ref	Location	Policy HO 1 Indicative Yield	Application Ref	Applicati on Yield	Outcome/expected date for determination
					November 2015
R5	Land south of Old Road, Longtown	60	14/0925	61	Determined: awaiting execution of S106
R6	Land west of Amberfield	25	15/0617	20 - 25	Determined: awaiting execution of S106
R8	Land adj Beech Cottage	15	12/0856	15	Determined 12 November 2014
R10	Land at Hadrians Camp	96	14/0930	99	Determined 23 January 2015 [under construction]
R11	Kingmoor Park Harker Estate	300	15/0812	300	Expected to be determined at committee on 8 January 2016
R16	Land at Broomfallen Road, Scotby	28	12/0790	28	Determined: awaiting execution of S106
R20	Land at Steele's Bank, Wetheral	40	15/0886	50	Expected to be determined at committee on 27 November 2015
R21	Land west of Wreay School	10	14/0875	7	Determined 1 October 2015