
Independent Examination of the Gedling Local Plan Planning Document (Part 2 Local Plan)

Matter 8: Housing Allocations in Key Settlements for Growth?

Issue 8a: Bestwood Village (Policy LPD65)

This Position Statement on the MIQs for Issue 8a- 8c) should be read in conjunction with the written representations on Bestwood Village and in particular the Westhouse Farm site submitted by GPA Ltd on behalf of Langridge Homes Ltd with respect to the Pre Submission Draft Local Plan.

Regard should also be had to plans and technical reports submitted as part of previous consultations and planning applications including a Pre Application submission in 2013, an outline planning application submitted in 2014 for the Safeguarded Land at Westhouse Farm in the adopted Local Plan for 101 dwellings (2014/0238) and which the Planning Committee resolved to grant permission subject to a S106 Agreement, and a separate application for a primary school, submitted in 2014 but still underdetermined. These documents have included:

- Planning Feasibility Study, A new Vision for Bestwood (Langridge Homes Ltd, 2009)
- Aboricultural Survey (2014)
- Archaeological Assessment (2013)
- Extended Phase 1 Habitats Survey (2014)
- Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy (2014)
- Hedgerow Assessment (2014)
- Planning Statement (2014)
- Design and Access Statement (2014)
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan (2014)

Q1 Does the amount of housing proposed in Bestwood Village accord with the ACS? (Policy LPD65)

The ACS requires that up to 560 new homes are provided at Bestwood during the plan period. It appears that this will be met as follows:

- Completions and commitments: 105
- The Sycamores: 25
- Bestwood Business Park: 220
- Westhouse Farm: 210

However, we are concerned that the Bestwood Business Park allocation (H13) which has an outline planning consent for up to 220 new homes may not achieve this number, and may indeed fall well short, when Reserve Matters applications come forward for approval. Our reasons for making this assertion are as follows:

- Potential contamination concerns which will require detailed investigations and mitigation measures to be considered when discharging conditions. It is likely that not all the land will be suitable for development and/or prove viable to develop;

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- Land take for site infrastructure including drainage works;
 - Density. With a site area of 6.16 ha, the proposed density is 35.7 dwelling units per ha, which is significantly higher than the recommended density for residential schemes within and adjoining Key Settlements such as Bestwood as stated in Policy LPD33 Residential Density. This policy states that *'within or adjacent to Bestwood Village, Calverton and Newstead where planning permission will not be granted for residential development of less than 25 dwellings per hectare'*. Notwithstanding reductions in the net developable area as a result of contamination and site infrastructure requirements, then assuming a density in the range of say 25-30 per ha, then the likely yield from this site can be expected to be in the order of 154 to 185.

Q2 Has full consideration been given to local services and facilities, drainage, flooding and highway safety in establishing the level of housing provision proposed in Bestwood Village?

Yes.

It is recognised that Bestwood is in need of regeneration and it is intended that further growth in housing will support and contribute towards the provision of a new primary school, a health centre/GP surgery, additional shops together with places to meet, eat and share a drink, improved children's and youth play facilities. These requirements are set down in the Bestwood Vision Action Plan document prepared by the people of Bestwood

With regards to services infrastructure we note that the allocation sites can be connected to the mains systems for electricity, water, gas and sewerage. A pre application submission was made for the Westhouse Farm in 2013, and the Highways Authority responded positively to development at Westhouse Farm. Also, a Planning Application for 101 homes on the Safeguarded Land at Westhouse Farm has a resolution to grant permission subject to a S106 agreement. There were no objections from the Highway Authority and the Statutory Undertakers including the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water. The proposed on site underground water attenuation tanks have been designed to receive surface water from the total proposed allocation at Westhouse Farm for 210 dwellings and also the site for the new school.

Issue 8b: Westhouse Farm (H12) (Policy LPD65)

Q3 Is the proposed allocation justified and appropriate in terms of the likely impacts of development?

Yes.

There are no significant impacts associated with the development of Westhouse Farm. This has been confirmed at the pre application stage and also through GBC's Assessment of alternative Option Sites for Housing. It represents the optimum location for the long term growth of Bestwood (refer also representations on Policy 65 Bestwood Village submitted on behalf of Langridge Homes Ltd by GPA Ltd with respect to the Submission Draft LPD).

Having regard to its impact on the Green Belt it was concluded that land to the north of Bestwood does not make a significant contribution to the Green Belt.

The Inspector to the ACS Public Examination considered that Bestwood is a sustainable location for development due to its proximity to the boundary of the main built up area (it is better located than Top Wighay) and would have less impact on services in Hucknall, as Bestwood has the benefit of good easy access to services within this segment of the urban area of Nottingham.

Q4 Is the proposed allocation deliverable? In particular, is it:

a) Confirmed by the landowner involved as being available for the use proposed?

Yes.

The landowner can confirm that the site is available for development, and he is anxious to take forward Phase 1 (101 homes on the Safeguarded Land) subject to finalising the S106 agreement.

b) Supported by evidence to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles can be provided?

The Highways Authority has confirmed at previous consultation stages and also through comments on planning applications at Westhouse Farm that a satisfactory access off Moor Road can be provided.

c) Deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services, and any environmental or other constraints?

Refer response to Q2.

Q5 Would the provision of a new primary school on this site lead to a reduction in the number of dwellings provided?

No.

Excluding the primary school there is enough land allocated to build 210 dwellings including 101 on the safeguarded land. The primary school site extends to 1.5 ha and would have capacity for another 40-45 additional dwellings if the Education Authority decided not to proceed with a new primary school on this site.

Q6 Would the development of this site for housing be viable?

Yes, subject to reduction in the affordable housing requirement. This should be reduced from 30% to 20% to bring it into line with Calverton, and also sites on the edge of the urban area, where land values and house selling prices are higher than in Bestwood.

Issue 8c: Bestwood Business Park (Policy H13) LPD 65)

Q7 Is the proposed allocation justified and appropriate in terms of the likely impacts of development?

This site has outline planning permission, so it is no longer necessary to justify the allocation.

However, we consider that the outline permission for 220 dwellings is too ambitious and will not be achieved. Please see comments to Question 1.

Q8 Is the proposed allocation deliverable? In particular, is it:

- a) **Confirmed by the landowner involved as being available for the use proposed?**
No comment.
- b) **Supported by evidence to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles can be provided?**
No comment.
- c) **Deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services, and any environmental or other constraints?**

The site should be deliverable subject to the relocation to existing tenants.

Q9 Has sufficient regard been given to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles and pedestrians can be provided?

No comment.

Q10 Would the density of development proposed on this site be appropriate?

At 35.7 dwellings per ha I consider that the proposed density is too high. Policy 33 states that minimum density should be achieved in Bestwood. At 35 per ha the density is 40% higher than the minimum. A more realistic density having regard to the character of the surrounding would be in the range of 25-30 per ha.

Q11 Have these matters been addressed through the planning application process, given that the site now benefits from planning permission?

No – as the planning permission is only in outline with matters of design left to the Reserve Matters stage.

Q12 Would the dwellings allocated on this site come forward for development during the plan period? What evidence is there to support this?

No comment.