



Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan Examination

**Issue 4:
Other Housing Matters (Q8-Q10)**

On behalf of:
Gleeson Developments

Date:
September 2015

Reference:
GA/RW/03913/S004

ISSUE 4: Other Housing Matters

10. *Neighbourhood Plans:* Does policy SS5 provide an acceptable level of guidance for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, especially in relation to the delivery of housing?

- 10.1.1 Policy SS5 should boost the target for housing in Oakley. The supporting paragraph's to the policy (4.35 and 4.36) highlight the good level of service provision and sustainable transport links which the village benefits from. It also highlights the modest level of housing growth in Oakley over the last 10 years set against a substantial level of local housing need.
- 10.1.2 When considered against the other settlements included under this policy, the number of households in housing need in Oakley at 425 households far exceeds that identified in the other settlements, Whitchurch being the next highest at 137. It is however the largest of the villages and considered able to accommodate a higher level of growth. Accordingly we consider policy needs to set a higher minimum figure for Oakley, as explained further below.
- 10.1.3 That Oakley contains sites capable of delivering more housing is clearly evident from a review of the sites identified in the Oakley and Deane Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14 Version). The NP identifies 5 housing sites with an area of 51ha, yet allocates a total of only 150 dwellings.¹ This equates to a density of development of just under 3dph. Even accounting for individual site constraints this is clearly an ineffective and unsustainable use of sites for housing to meet identified housing needs. Our clients land at Beech Tree Close is one of the allocated housing sites. However the NP seeks to restrict the number of dwellings on this site to approximately 25 dwellings.
- 10.1.4 The figure of 25 dwellings fails to recognise the opportunity the site presents to bring forward the social and economic benefits of more housing. The limited number of units identified for the site is puzzling given that the sustainability appraisal for the NP, identifies no adverse impacts would arise from greater provision. Furthermore the site has already been the subject of an outline planning application ref. 14/00963/OUT for 107 dwellings which was subsequently reduced to 85 dwellings, as shown on the layout plan (**appendix 1**). The proposed layout allows for 2.3ha open space and was recommended for approval by officers, having satisfactorily resolved all outstanding issues raised during the consideration of the application by statutory consultees.
- 10.1.5 Indeed the proposals will provide a policy compliant level of affordable housing. A mix of unit sizes which accords with policy requirements and the emerging aspiration of the Oakley & Deane NP to provide for a greater proportion of smaller dwellings. The level of new publicly accessible open space will exceed local

¹ Oakley and Deane NP Appendix E

policy requirements. Furthermore the scheme will provide jobs and economic benefits during the construction and operational phases which will benefit local shops and services and help sustain public transport facilities. These will be further boosted by agreed contributions towards improvements to pedestrian and public transport infrastructure locally. In strategic terms it will also provide a safeguard to the housing supply in the event the other allocated sites are the subject of delay or disruption.

- 10.1.6 Policy SS5 indicates that a further 150 homes will need to be identified through neighbourhood plans in unspecified areas, other than those specifically listed. Given the size of the settlement at Oakley, the level of housing need, the acknowledged good level of service provision and its sustainable transport links described above the policy should require the settlement to accommodate more housing. As explained above the settlement clearly has scope to accommodate such growth which will provide social and economic benefits to the area.
- 10.1.7 The current wording of the policy fails to encourage NP bodies to positively prepare plans which support the government's housing growth agenda. This is borne out by considering the evidence base to the emerging Oakley and Deane Neighbourhood Planning. To inform the number of additional dwellings to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan a community survey was undertaken in April 2014. The question gave a multiple choice answer with five options offered the minimum of which was a maximum of 150 extra dwellings. Unsurprisingly an overwhelming number of respondents favoured this minimum figure and the NP has progressed on that basis since.
- 10.1.6 The sustainability appraisal (April 2015) to the Local Plan makes it clear that more housing could be accommodated in Oakley with limited environmental effects. In fact it actually recommends an allocation of 200 dwellings for Oakley, recognising the positive effect this would have on meeting local housing needs. It also highlights this would not have significant adverse environmental effects. It also tests a third option for 250 dwellings the effects of which are little different from that for 200 dwellings.
- 10.1.7 Given the SA recommendations it is unclear why a constrained figure of only 150 dwellings for Oakley has been included. The wording of the policy should provide a more positive and ambitious target for this sustainable settlement. The settlement possesses our clients site at Beech Tree Close which has been shown to be capable of satisfactorily accommodating a level of housing significantly higher than the NP allocation, while also delivering a substantial area of on-site open space.
- 10.1.8 The policy should be amended in respect of Oakley, such that the settlement is required to accommodate a minimum allocation of 250 dwellings. The current level of provision is unjustified and ineffective and therefore unsound in NPPF terms.

Appendix 1
Proposed Layout Plan (Application Ref. 14/00963/OUT)



- KEY:**
- - - - - Application site boundary
 - * Affordable housing unit
 - ■ ■ ■ ■ Native hedgerow
 - Wall
 - Timber fence
 - Refuse / recycling / glass
 - Unallocated parking space
 - ▶ Primary entrance to dwelling
 - Proposed tree planting

NOTES:

Roof shapes are indicative only and will be informed by the design of individual dwellings at the reserved matter stage

For detailed landscape proposals please refer to landscape strategy plan

LAND WEST OF BEECH TREE CLOSE, OAKLEY

Site layout plan

DATE: 01.08.14 DWG NO: 1145 / 03
 SCALE: 1:500@A0

