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Hartlepool Local Plan 2017 Examination in Public – Matter 2 Locational Strategy

Response on behalf of Wynyard Park
Ltd

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1. Issue 1- Spatial Vision, Themes and Objectives and Policy LS1

Question 4 – Is the Plan strategy over-reliant on a small number of large strategic sites?

- 1.1 The Submission Draft of the Local Plan (SDLP) is not over-reliant on strategic sites in order to meet housing needs; rather, it is the large strategic sites that represent the best opportunity to deliver housing developments at the scale that is needed to fund associated infrastructure and facilities. With specific reference to WP, HSG6 represents an important and unique strategic opportunity within the Borough to deliver new family homes in one of the most marketable and deliverable areas of the North East and capitalise upon the successful developments already delivered on-site to date.
- 1.2 The increased allocation of 732 dwellings (the inclusion of HSG6c) at WP within the SDLP is important to ensuring that the HSG6 and INF4 allocations are sustainable and that a high quality development is delivered. The assertion that a quantum of 732 dwellings is required in order to achieve a critical mass of development to attract and deliver the type of facilities and services to ensure WP becomes self-sufficient has been maintained by WPL in representations made to each stage of the plan including early representations to the Issues and Options stage of the Plan in July and August 2014.
- 1.3 Whilst the delivery of large scale strategic development at WP is crucial to the delivery of the plan, the plan should not be considered over-reliant upon this or at risk as a result. As identified within our client's Publication Draft representations, a significant amount of development has already taken place at WP with developments now partially complete and occupied. Notwithstanding the 732 dwellings allocated, feedback from developers regarding committed development confirms that as of early summer 2017 at least 154 dwellings had been fully constructed across WP in Hartlepool and Stockton (with at least 101 in HBC) by four major housebuilders. Construction has continued and additional dwellings are currently being built and at least 17 more had been sold off plan prior to construction by Barratt David Wilson. Details of current completions and projections are appended to this statement (Appendix 1).
- 1.4 Taylor Wimpey was the first developer on site, commencing construction in February 2014 with the wider construction work by other developers starting from 2015 onwards. The key information of note in relation to predicted delivery of existing commitments in both authorities are as follows:

- Taylor Wimpey has projected an average build rate of 28 dwellings per annum up until 2023 in Hartlepool to complete their Wynyard Manor developments at the Pentagon. In practice however, most years will deliver 30 dwellings.
- WPL estimate an average delivery rate of circa 14 self-build dwellings per annum across three consented sites in Hartlepool up until 2021.
- Avant Homes, Story Homes and Barratt David Wilson have are projecting an average build rate of between 25 and 28 dwellings per annum per developer until the completion of their existing developments (likely to be between 2019 and 2020).

1.5 The figures above provide an update to details contained within HBC's *Five year supply of deliverable housing sites* document but are broadly in line with the projections contained within it. As such, WPL consider the scale of the cross boundary allocations and the trajectory's proposed for future development on the site within the HBC evidence base to be appropriate. Based on current rates of development and mindful that a number of housebuilders can be accommodated on site at once delivering new homes simultaneously across multiple outlets, it is estimated that with planning consent the Hartlepool allocation could be developed and completed well within ten years. Please see Matter 7 for further details.

1.6 To provide further detail regarding commitments and the recent planning history of WP. WPL's representations to the Preferred Options Consultation Document (dated 22nd July 2016) provided context to their request for an allocation for 732 dwellings which included a brief summary of development that had taken place over the preceding 5 year period. An update on this position as of September 2017 is set out below. In addition to the draft allocation for 732 dwellings in HSG6 there are planning consents or resolutions to grant planning consent subject to the signing of a S106 agreement for:

- up to 400 dwellings in Hartlepool on white land shown on the Local Plan proposals map (established via overlapping outline applications H/2011/0102, H/2012/0360, H/2013/0033, H/2014/0581 and H/2015/0270); and
- A further 400 dwellings in Stockton (forming part of Stockton's draft 1,100 dwelling allocation) established via outline application 12/2784.

1.7 Within these committed sites, full planning consent has since been granted for:

- 238 dwellings in Hartlepool – Comprising 168 dwellings for Taylor Wimpey at the Meadows and South Pentagon plus 70 self-build plots within the Manorside, Wellington Gardens and Beaumont developments; and
- 343 dwellings in Stockton – Comprising 103 dwellings by Barratt David Wilson Homes, 120 by Avant Homes and 120 dwellings by Story Homes.

- 1.8 As stated a proportion of the above is now under construction or already occupied (101). Furthermore, it is likely that by the time of the Examination in Public begins, Taylor Wimpey will have had full planning consent granted for a further 109 dwellings on land at HSG6a once a S106 is signed in the coming days. This will complete their Wynyard Manor development on land known locally as “the Pentagon”. Live planning applications have also been submitted by WPL in Hartlepool for:
- An outline application for 383 dwellings on HSG6b;
 - An outline application for 13 self-build plots (the Lyndhurst) on land at HSG6b;
 - An outline application for 23 self-build plots (Rose Garden) on land at HSG6c; and
 - An application for full planning consent for 14 Almshouses style terraced dwellings on HSG6c, marketed toward retired people looking to down size.
- 1.9 Applications are also being prepared to develop the remainder of the “white land” as shown on the draft proposals map and it is envisaged that 74 dwellings will be delivered on this site (The Mulberry and Site A). Each of the sites described above are shown on the accompanying feasibility plan submitted in response to questions raised in Matter 9. However, the following plans have also been prepared and appended to this submission (Appendix 1) to demonstrate the following:
- Plan 1 – Development land at Wynyard Park subject to outline consent/resolution to grant planning consent subject to a signed S106 (Hartlepool and Stockton) for residential development.
 - Plan 2 – Sites with planning consent pursuant to the original 400 outline consents listed above:
 - Plan 3 - Development Sites that are fully constructed or currently under construction
 - Plan 4 – Development sites subject to live applications and pre-application discussions.
- 1.10 The accompanying photos (Appendix 1) further illustrate this. Mindful of the above, it is clear that the development of WP for new housing is already well advanced in Hartlepool, the consented site at the Meadows is fully constructed with construction on-going on the Southern Pentagon and self-build plots are under construction on each of the consented sites. The plans listed above demonstrate that where construction works are not taking place, much of the land in question is already subject to a planning consent or a live application and that development is taking place at a considerable rate.

- 1.11 In short, WP is vital to the overall success of the SDLP; it will ensure the delivery of the housing requirement rather than increase risk of under-provision by relying on a single site. The strategic allocation is not optimistic and is grounded in the reality of existing planning consents and demand on one of, if not the most, deliverable location in Hartlepool, as reflected by existing delivery rates and the on-going submission of new planning applications. The mix of executive self-build development, smaller Almshouses (generally aimed at those looking to downsize) and the delivery of high quality family homes of various sizes in an attractive location ensures that WP can cater for a wide range of the market requirements within the Borough. Evidence to date suggests that the allocation of 732 dwellings will facilitate further housing growth at what has already proved to be a popular market location and will allow a critical mass of housing to improve the sustainability of the site through the delivery of quality community facilities, highways improvements, affordable housing and a mix of house types. As stated in WPL's representations to the Publication Draft Plan, the inclusion of WP as a strategic site ensures that the plan is both positively prepared and justified. Please see our response to Matter 9 for further details.

Question 5 – Does the Plan strike an appropriate balance of growth at the two strategic locations of High Tunstall and Wynyard? Does the balance need to be adjusted (up or down) at either location for sustainability and/or deliverability reasons?

- 1.12 The SDLP strikes an appropriate balance and adjustments to the allocation at WP are not necessary. The current balance ensures a critical mass of development that will enhance the sustainability of the development via the delivery of associated infrastructure and community facilities.
- 1.13 Whatever the conclusion of the EIP regarding OAN and the housing requirement, it is WPL's view that there should be no reduction of the number of dwellings at WP for the sustainability reasons outlined above. It is WPL's view that the draft allocations as proposed provide an appropriate balance and ensure that the plan is positively prepared and effective as required by the test of soundness in paragraph 182 of the NPPF.

Questions 10 & 11 – Is there reasonable consistency between the emerging Neighbourhood Plans and the strategy and policies in the Local Plan? Does the Local Plan avoid duplicating planning processes that will apply to the neighbourhood areas?

Is the Local Plan clear on those policies which should be regarded as strategic policies for the purpose of neighbourhood plan preparation?

- 1.14 WPL have engaged with the co-ordinators of the Wynyard Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) which is currently evolving. WP is identified by the WNP as a site for the delivery of new homes and as such there are no strategic conflicts with the draft WNP. Draft Policy W1 within the WNP specifies that *“housing development will take place on sites with planning permission and those allocated in the Boroughs' Local Plans”*. Nonetheless, WPL would welcome a reference within the LS1 and HSG6 policies to confirm that they should form the starting point for neighbourhood planning.
- 1.15 It is noted that the draft WNP Policy W2 identifies WP as a site for the delivery of executive housing in the first instance rather than a full range of house types as required by HSG6. Draft Policies W6, W7 and W8 list and propose to specify the type and location of community uses, open space, sports facilities and public rights of way to be delivered at WP which do not fully reflect and tie in with those which are listed in the SDLP policy INF4. This approach is inconsistent with HSG6 and INF4 and mindful of WPL's representations, it is important to allow a flexible approach to the siting of development within the allocated site. Furthermore, Draft WNP Policy W9 sets out the scope of developer contributions with the potential to clash with the approach and costs already agreed with the Council.
- 1.16 Whilst these are considered minor conflicts rather than strategic, and the WNP policies still generally accord with the principles of HSG6 and INF4, there is the potential for policy duplication in this instance. However, it is WPL's view that the Hartlepool Local Plan should take precedence on these matters and as such will be important for Neighbourhood Plan policies to accord with the detail of the Borough Local Plan policies moving forward. As the WNP is in draft and not yet submitted for an examination and referendum, the final version will be altered to accord with the SDLP.