

Council's Response to Inspector's Further Questions (June 2013)

2. a) It is indicated that masterplans/brief will be expected for "many" of the allocated sites but are the proposed minor changes necessary for Sites SER3 and SER7 where the quantum of development is quite small and for Sites SER4 and SER5 where development has already commenced following the grant of planning permission?

SER3 and SER7 are proposed to accommodate a minimum of 50 and 60 dwellings respectively. SER3 has been subject to an outline planning application. However, given the nature of the site it is considered that a Design and Access Statement, the content of which is set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013, would be sufficient for this site. The proposed amendment in relation to masterplans/design briefs can be removed from the proposed schedule of changes for SER3.

In contrast, the Council feels that if masterplans/design briefs are required for a number of the allocated sites, SER7 should be one of those sites. We are mindful of the particular need to ensure that the topography is sensitively considered in this location (paragraph 3.211 of the Allocations Submission Document) and that development must be sensitive to views of St Nicholas Church (paragraph 3.212) and feel that excluding SER7 from the sites to be accompanied by a masterplan/design brief would send out a negative message in this respect.

As planning permission has already been granted for SER4 and SER5 and development has commenced, this requirement can also be removed from the proposed schedule of changes.

2. b) Although setting out expectations in one place the wording of the concept statements results in duplication with Policies in the Core Strategy. However, my initial view is that the substantial revisions that would be required to remove unnecessary text are not justified.

Noted. We agree with the view that substantial revisions would not be justified, but we do believe the inclusion of this wording does assist the interpretation and understanding of the Concept Statements.

8. If the purpose of Policy BFR2 is to highlight that the site is no longer to be retained in employment uses and that housing development, amongst other things, will be supported then should not a statement to this effect be included?

Yes. A sentence setting out that the site would be appropriate for a mixed use development which will be determined in the HAAP can be included in the Plan, as set out in the proposed schedule of changes.

10. My view is that all land affected by the site allocation should be included on the site map whether or not it is within the existing settlement boundary.

The part of the site to the west of Hockley that is within the existing settlement boundary can be included within SER3 as set out in the proposed schedule of changes.

13. So is the answer to my original question 'no'?

That is correct.

14. c) From my inspection it appears that Old School Meadow may be a private road and, moreover, that it would not be physically possible to connect to Site SER9a because intervening land is used for parking. Whilst there are no highway objections the reference to possible access to the south therefore appears unlikely to be practical unless further land is incorporated. Does the Council and/or Highway Authority have any further comments in this regard?

The residential development directly to the south of SER9a along Southend Road is already located within the existing settlement boundary, and so does not require reallocation for residential use.

In addition, Essex County Council Highways have confirmed the following:

"The HA does not have any concerns over means of access to this allocation. This matter would be addressed at an application stage and would be investigated through the Transport Assessment which would also address the safety and capacity assessments of local junctions. It would appear that a number of access options with improvements could be achieved, these include:

- south utilising Old School Meadow
- north with Barrow Hall Road
- Little Wakering Road through acquisition of property with site frontage

All above options in principal could accommodate development in this location".

17. Given the stance of the Highway Authority further evidence will be required to demonstrate soundness.

Noted. The landowner for the site has employed a specialist consultant to develop a solution for safe highways access to the site (please see attached letter).

18. The intention is understood but in order to link Site NEL3 an internal access road would be required across land outside the development area and across the track to the Local Wildlife Site. Is this practical or should the site map be adjusted to suit?

The land to the north of NEL3 is under the same control as NEL3 itself (see Appendix D of the 2012 SHLAA Review¹). It is envisaged that the access road would not form part of the development area as such, and is not included as part of the allocated area of NEL3 for employment use. The precise design and route of the access road would be determined in detail at the planning application stage.

¹ 2012 SHLAA Review (page 364):

http://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/rochford.gov.uk/files/documents/files/planning_shlaa_appd_wgw.pdf

19. In relation to page 40 and para 3.42 of the Plan there is reference to a Statement of Common Ground in the proposed schedule of changes. Could this be provided to me and made generally available?

Yes. The aforementioned Statement of Common Ground will be submitted to the Programme Officer by the 16 August deadline.

20. What are the “outstanding matters” affecting the determination of the planning application at Stambridge Mills (Ref:11/00494/FUL)?

The outstanding matters for the planning application at Stambridge Mills include:

- Details of flood evacuation plan to be agreed with Emergency Planner;
- Awaiting consultation response from Essex County Council SuDS approval team;
- Location and need for proposed sub station to be confirmed;
- Flood mitigation measures to satisfaction of Environment Agency to be agreed;
- Awaiting consultation response on ecology.