

Woking Borough Council

SENT BY EMAIL

Graham Parrott
Planning Policy Manager

Planning Service

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Direct line: [REDACTED]

Calls may be recorded for training or monitoring

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date: 28 July 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL: DRAFT SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD)

Thank you for consulting Waverley Borough Council on the above document.

Waverley Borough Council has serious concerns that the draft Woking Site Allocations DPD is not seeking to meet the full housing needs for the Borough recently identified in the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which was jointly prepared by Woking, Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils. The most recent published version of the SHMA (December 2014) indicates a need for between 390 and 588 new homes per annum (2011-31) but the draft final SHMA (June 2015) suggests that there is a need for about 630 new homes per annum in Woking over the 2013-33 period.

The Site Allocations DPD seeks to allocate sufficient sites to deliver the levels of growth set in the Woking 2027 Core Strategy, which provided for **a minimum of 4,964** net additional dwellings (292 homes per annum). 964 homes have been completed in the first four years of the plan period (2010-2014), leaving 4,000 homes for the rest of the plan period to 2027. The Site Allocations DPD identifies sites to deliver this number (to 2027), primarily in the urban area although four sites in the Green Belt are identified for new housing to be delivered in the plan period, in line with CS10 which identified the Green Belt to make a contribution of about 550 new homes between 2022-27. A further eight sites in the Green Belt are safeguarded for release in the period 2027-40. .

The Woking Core Strategy Inspector's Report stated that "*an average housing completion figure of 292 dwellings per annum is reasonable provided it is seen as an average minimum and not an absolute target*" (para 83). However, the Site Allocations DPD treats the Core Strategy housing figure as an absolute target and not a minimum.

The Site Allocations DPD would not meet the housing needs as now assessed and this would result in a shortfall across the housing market area, which includes Waverley.

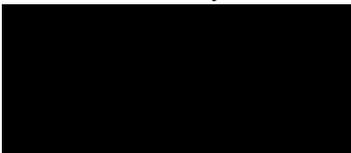
Much has changed since the Woking Core Strategy was adopted in 2012. For example,

- The South East Plan has since been revoked (except for policy NRM6).
- Woking's own Green Belt Review has been completed and this suggests that there is scope to deliver 1,833 homes between 2022 and 2040 on land to be released from the Green Belt. It is unclear, therefore, why at least some of these sites cannot be released from the Green Belt and allocated now for new housing, particularly as the housing target in the Core Strategy was a minimum only.
- A new SHMA is nearing completion, indicating a need for Woking of up to 630 new homes per annum.
- Guildford and Waverley have made progress with their own Local Plans, albeit neither has been adopted. Waverley would not be in a position to meet any shortfall arising from Woking's need.

To conclude, Waverley Borough Council has concerns that Woking is not proposing to allocate sufficient sites to get close to meeting its objectively assessed needs for housing as set out in the recently produced West Surrey SHMA. Rather than safeguard land in the Green Belt for release between 2027 and 2040, the Council considers that at least some of this land should be identified for release in the period to 2027. This would go at least some of the way towards meeting the full objectively assessed need for housing. However, given the changes in circumstances that have occurred since the Woking Core Strategy was adopted, we suggest that you consider commencing a review of the Core Strategy.

Notwithstanding this concern, the Council would like to stress the importance of, and our commitment to, continued joint working and liaison between Woking and Waverley and hope you view these comments as constructive. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further.

Yours sincerely,



Graham Parrott
Planning Policy Manager