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Local Plan Issues:

Viability and funding infrastructure

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Overview



- Do NIMBYs and BANANAs create Garden Communities?
- The NPPF 2019 and the revised PPG on plan-making & viability;
- Case study: Uttlesford's Garden Communities;
- Case Study: North Essex Authorities' Garden Communities
- Case study: Dunsfold Aerodrome, Waverley
- Case study: Tandridge and South Godstone Garden Community;
- Question and Answer session;
- Concluding Remarks.

Why Garden Communities?



- Localism and the rejection of top-down planning;
- Neighbourhood areas and their plans;
- Infrastructure deficits in existing areas;
- Democratic accountability;
- NIMBYs and BANANAs - perception or reality?
- New settlements and urban extensions;
- Garden Cities, Garden Suburbs, Garden Villages;
- MHCLG support for Garden Communities

The NPPF 2019



- NPPF 2019 “The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development”. (§72)
- §72(d) realistic assessment of lead in times.
- Footnote 35 “associated infrastructure requirements may not be capable of being identified fully at the outset”.

Revised Local Plan PPG



- SOCG for responding to infrastructure (ID: 61-016-20190315)
- Evidence gathering to be proportionate and justified (ID: 61-038-20190315)
- Evidence on viability (ID: 61-048-20190315)
- Requirement for IFS & recognition uncertainty new settlements (ID: 61-059-20190315).
- Requirement to demonstrate 'reasonable prospect' new settlement coming forward in set timetable (ID: 61-060-20190315).

Revised viability PPG



- Places responsibility on site promoters (ID: 10-002-20190509, ID: 10-006-20190509).
- Repeated reference to price paid for a site never being a justification for failing to accord with policy (Reference ID: 10-002-20190509, ID: 10-006-20190509, ID: 10-011-20180724, ID: 10-014-20190509, ID: 10-018-20190509).
- Remains clear there will be a need for viability evidence around strategic sites (ID: 10-005-20180724)

Case Study: Uttlesford



- Three Garden Communities in one LPA area
- One cross-boundary GC
- Change of political control
- New transport infrastructure needed
- Highways England & LHA satisfied
- But Inspectors were not
- Realistic trajectory delayed infrastructure
- Sustainability open to question
- LPA and promoters not always agreed

Case Study: Uttlesford



- Importance of the evidence base
- Need for realism as well as aspiration
- Securing agreements with key bodies
- Flushing out the difficulties early on
- Building in flexibility

Case Study: North Essex Authorities



- Three Garden Communities across 3 LPA areas
- New transport infrastructure needed
- Inspector had initial concerns so suspension
- Substantial further evidence prepared
- Highways England and LHA satisfied
- Inspector probed viability in detail at hearings
- Inspector supported one GC but not the others
- Examination to continue with Main Mods

Case Study: North Essex Authorities



- Clash of expectations: what is “proportionate”?
- Avoid over-complication
- Choose your battles
- Less can be more
- Work with what you have got

Case Study: Dunsfold Aerodrome



Before



A Potential After



Dunsfold Aerodrome



- A key plank of now adopted Waverley LP Pt 1
- Pressing need for housing and serious issue of affordability
- Inspector described allocation as “*excellent opportunity*” and decision as “*brave*”, concluded that clear large housing allocation at DA was much better than small or none there, in sustainability terms [§§77-93]
- Useful comparison with some other GV locations

Dunsfold Aerodrome



- Road links are described in Inspector's Report
- But was key issue regarding public transport.
- Ultimately overcome in Planning Appeal by s.106 mechanisms funding bus services in perpetuity
- Called-in – useful SoS decision letter

Dunsfold Aerodrome



- Some key reasons why successful
- Land ownership / co-ordination
- Robust traffic assessment
- Demonstrated ability to meet infrastructure req so as to make site location sustainable
- Size / location of site – viability
- Amount of PDL
- Leading to support from LPA

Dunsford Aerodrome



- Proportionate evidence base
- DA proposals in gestation some time
- Previous SoS refusal, 2009 – based on *“unsustainable location”*
- Outline scheme being developed in near parallel with eLP
- Upshot – wealth of evidence in support

Case Study: South Godstone GC



- Key plank of spatial strategy in eLP (in examination) – 1,400 units within plan period
- Tandridge has 94% Green Belt coverage
- SGGC recognised by Central Govt as meeting key qualities of GV and capable of being exemplar
- Benefit of existing train station at South Godstone
- Location whittled down in ev base from 22 potentials, by series of studies over years

South Godstone Garden Community



- SGGC to be brought forward within Area Action Plan, with its own I&O stage, submission and examination (under 2019 NPPF)
- Council proposing to be actively involved in land assembly
- Supported by detailed viability information
- Inspector is considering implications of HIF position, and seeking further information on position of statutory consultees in that respect. Concern is restricted to highways issues and in particular potential “severe” impact at J6, M25; and *when* that might arise



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