



**VISION
PLANNING**

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Examination

**Written Statement on behalf of Crudwell
Parish Council and Crudwell
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Matter 3**

April 2019

Project Reference: 00001



Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Examination

Written Statement on behalf of Crudwell Parish Council and Crudwell Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Matter 3

Document Issue Record

Version:	1	2	3	
Description/ Status:	Draft for clients	Update following comments	Final	
Date:	02/04/2019	04/04/2019	08/04/2019	
Produced by:	Stuart Miles BEng MA MRTPI	Stuart Miles BEng MA MRTPI	Stuart Miles BEng MA MRTPI	

April 2019

Project Reference: 00001

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Response to Inspector’s Matter 3 Questions	3
3	Response to Inspector’s Matter 2 Questions	7
4	Conclusion	11

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This written statement, on behalf of Crudwell Parish Council (CPC) and Crudwell Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (CNPSG), responds to the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (HSA) Inspector's explanatory note dated 13th March 2019, and the additional question that results.
- 1.2 The Inspector's explanatory note explains that the starting point for the Examination is to be the submitted version of the HSA, and that he will consider whether the changes proposed by Wiltshire Council in the Schedule of Proposed Changes are necessary to make the plan sound.
- 1.3 It is our view that the Ridgeway Farm site should be deleted from the HSA, that to do so would make the plan sound and not to do so would make it unsound.
- 1.4 We have contacted the Examination Programme Officer to ask to appear at the matter 3 hearing on the afternoon of 16th April, to discuss "Ridgeway Farm, Crudwell H2.13 in originally submitted plan".
- 1.5 Section 2 of this written statement sets out our response to the Inspector's updated matter 3 questions.
- 1.6 As we did not attend the hearing session relating to matter 2 on 2nd and 3rd April, we have taken the opportunity to respond to the Inspector's Issues and Questions relating to matter 2 in section 3 of this statement.

2 Response to Inspector's Matter 3 Questions

- 2.1 Our main case remains that there is no strategic need to identify any new housing sites at Crudwell so there is no need for the HSA to allocate any housing sites at Crudwell.
- 2.2 There is, however, a local housing need in Crudwell. The level of local need, and the location of any housing site allocations required to meet that need, is best left to the Crudwell Neighbourhood Plan (CNP).
- 2.3 On that basis, for the HSA to allocate the Ridgeway Farm site would not be justified, nor would it be consistent with national policy, and therefore it would not be sound.
- 2.4 In response to the specific questions asked by the Inspector in relation to Issue 5, we respond as follows.

Issue 5: Are the proposed sites justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

- *Does the plan provide sufficient detail on form, scale, access and quantity of development for each site?*
- *Is the amount of development proposed for each site justified having regard to any constraints and the provision of necessary infrastructure?*
- *What is the likely impact of the proposed development on the following factors and do any of these indicate that the site should not be allocated:*
 - *biodiversity, in particular but not restricted to European protected habitats and species;*
 - *green infrastructure and agricultural land;*
 - *landscape quality and character;*
 - *heritage assets;*
 - *strategic and local infrastructure including transport;*
 - *the efficient operation of the transport network, highway safety.*
 - *air and water quality, noise pollution, odours, land stability, groundwater and flood risk;*
 - *open space, recreational facilities and public rights of way.*
- *In relation to the above, does the plan contain effective safeguards or mitigation measures necessary to achieve an acceptable form of development?*

-
- *What infrastructure is critical to the delivery of each site? Where contributions are specified, are they necessary and justified by the evidence base? Is the plan sufficiently clear on how and when infrastructure provision will be required?*
 - *Is the site in an accessible location with good access to everyday facilities by a range of means of transport? Does the plan provide an adequate basis to address any areas of deficiency?*
 - *In cases where allocations do not have specific policies, is the reliance on supporting text likely to be an effective means of delivering the Council's requirements for each site? What is the justification for some sites having specific policies and some not?*
 - *Is the development proposed for each site deliverable in the timescales envisaged?*
- 2.5 The Regulation 14 draft of the CNP¹ proposes to allocate a site at Tuners Lane for 20 to 25 dwellings.
- 2.6 The Ridgeway Farm (phase 2) site proposed through the CNP process coincides with the boundary of the refused application for 36 dwellings with reference 18/05429/FUL. It is larger than site H2.13 proposed in the submission draft HSA.
- 2.7 However, the CNP *Sustainability Appraisal and Evidence Base*² explains that both the Ridgeway Farm site and the preferred Tuners Lane site are deliverable, but that the Tuners Lane site is more sustainable because, inter alia:
- It has a lesser impact on the highways network
 - Its accessibility is safer, particularly for pedestrians
 - It has a lesser impact on heritage assets
- 2.8 As set out in our March 2019 written statement³, the proposed Tuners Lane allocation has received a good level of support from the local community. Nevertheless, objections have been raised, including from Edenstone, which need to be considered fully before the CNP is submitted for examination.
- 2.9 As these CNP representations have not yet been fully considered, we would submit that it would be prejudicial to that process to respond directly to the Inspector's site-specific questions at this stage in the CNP. Our case is not affected by how well, or otherwise, the Ridgeway Farm site meets the tests set out in the Inspector's questioning, but that there

¹ <http://www.my-crudwell.org/content/uploads/2018/12/Neighbourhood-Plan.pdf>

² <http://www.my-crudwell.org/content/uploads/2018/12/SA-FINAL-part-1.pdf> and <http://www.my-crudwell.org/content/uploads/2018/12/SA-FINAL-part-2.pdf>

³

<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s159285/PSM210Matter2WrittenStatementCrudwellParishCouncilNeighbourhoodPlanSteeringGroup.pdf>

-
- is no strategic need for the HSA to allocate any sites at Crudwell.
- 2.10 Nevertheless, as set out in our March 2019 written statement, the CPC/CNPSG is taking its responsibility to provide for local housing need seriously. Paragraph 4.15 of the WCS notes that "*development will predominantly take the form of small housing ... sites...*" and that "*small housing sites are defined as sites involving fewer than 10 dwellings.*" Despite this, the CPC/CNPSG has agreed to allocate a site for 20 to 25 dwellings because it accepts that local housing needs should be met.
- 2.11 In response to the Inspector's final matter 3 question, set out immediately below, we respond as follows.
- *Is the deletion of the site necessary to make the plan 'sound'?*
- 2.12 Paragraph 182 of the 2012 NPPF reads as follows:
182. The Local Plan will be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound. A local planning authority should submit a plan for examination which it considers is "sound" – namely that it is:
- **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.
- 2.13 Our response to this question is that the allocation of the Ridgeway Farm site in the HSA is not "justified", because there is no strategic need for it, for the reasons set out in our March 2019 written statement and also in section 3 of this statement.
- 2.14 The first Core Planning Principle set out in the 2012 NPPF is relevant. This reads:

17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. Plans should be kept up-to-date, and be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues. They should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency;

2.15 For the HSA to allocate the Ridgeway Farm site given that there is no strategic need for it, when the CNP is working towards meeting Crudwell Parish's identified local need, would fail to "enable local people to shape their surroundings", and thereby conflict with this Core Planning Principle. It would therefore not be "consistent with national policy".

2.16 It is for these two reasons that we would argue that the allocation of the Ridgeway Farm site would not make the HSA sound.

3 Response to Inspector's Matter 2 Questions

- 3.1 As our case against the HSA's allocation of Ridgeway Farm stems from our argument that there is no strategic need for the HSA to allocate any housing sites at Crudwell, and as we did not attend the matter 2 hearings, we would like to take this opportunity to respond to the Inspector's questions in this regard. We understand that this is acceptable to the Inspector.

Issue 2: Does the WHSAP make adequate provision to meet housing requirements as set out in the WCS?

2.1 The WCS contains housing figures at a County, HMA and settlement level. Which is the most appropriate scale at which to consider provision in order to assess consistency with the WCS?

- 3.2 It is appropriate to consider housing provision at both the HMA and the Community Area scale.

- 3.3 The 2012 NPPF requires LPAs to meet housing needs in the housing market area, so this is an appropriate scale on which to begin that assessment.

- 3.4 The WCS (para 4.26) then explains that "*in order to direct development at a strategic level to the most suitable, sustainable locations and at appropriate times, the area strategies contain an indicative housing requirement for each Community Area...*". The implication of this is that an alternative distribution would not be the most suitable, sustainable location for housing.

2.2 Based on the most up-to-date evidence, what is the residual level of development required to meet the housing requirement identified in the WCS? What component of this is the WHSAP expected to meet?

- 3.5 Tables 2.1 and 5.1 of the July 2018 Topic Paper 4 Addendum indicate that the residual strategic housing requirement in the NWWHMA is 1,109 dwellings. Paragraph 2.1 notes that this excludes allocations proposed in the HSA.

2.4 In light of the above, does the WHSAP make adequate overall provision to ensure the delivery of the minimum housing requirement as set out in the WCS?

- 3.6 Table 5.4 of the July 2018 Topic Paper 4 Addendum shows that 1,253 dwellings will be delivered if the housing sites proposed after the Schedule of Proposed Changes are taken into account. This means that Wiltshire Council's proposed allocations make adequate provision for the WCS housing requirements without needing to allocate Ridgeway Farm.

2.5 Is the predicted delivery of allocated sites realistic in terms of the

contribution they would make through the Plan period?

- 3.7 Yes. While table 2.3 of the July 2018 Topic Paper 4 suggests a less than 5 year supply in 2024 and 2025, this table excludes the 1,253 dwellings proposed to be allocated via the HSA (according to para 2.4).
- 3.8 Therefore, when these additional dwellings are included in the supply, the position will improve.
- 3.9 It should also be noted that the proposed allocation in the CNP, and no doubt in other neighbourhood plans, would improve the situation further, thereby ensuring a 5 year supply throughout the plan period.

Issue 3: Does the distribution of site allocations accord with the spatial strategy in the WCS?

3.1 Is the overall distribution of housing allocations consistent with the spatial strategy set out in the WCS?

3.2 Is the distribution within each HMA consistent with the WCS?

- 3.10 Yes. The WCS has concluded that the distribution of dwellings set out in WCS Table 1 is the most suitable and sustainable distribution, so it is logical to base allocations on this overall distribution.

3.3 Is the approach set out in Stages 1 and 2 of the site selection process justified? In particular, has a consistent and justified approach been taken to excluding specific locations from the scope of the exercise, including:

- *Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages;*
- *Areas where housing needs in the WCS are indicated to have been met; and*
- *Areas with made or emerging Neighbourhood Plans?*

- 3.11 Yes. Table 1 of the WCS sets out the most suitable and sustainable distribution of housing within each housing market area and then within each community area, specifying a total number of homes to be delivered within the larger, and most sustainable, settlement in that community area, and then within the remainder of the community area.
- 3.12 It is logical to focus a large proportion of a community area's strategic housing requirement towards the larger and most sustainable settlement within that community area.
- 3.13 Our interest is in Crudwell, within the Malmesbury Community Area. The site selection approach is set out in the July 2018 Malmesbury Community Area Topic Paper.
- 3.14 Table 2.3 explains that the sum of completions between 2006 and 2017 and commitments between 2017 and 2026 more than meets the

indicative requirement from 2006-2026 from the WCS for Malmesbury, Malmesbury Community Area Remainder and Malmesbury Community Area as a whole.

3.15 To specify:

- Malmesbury's indicative strategic housing requirement is 885 dwellings; 1,042 dwellings have been completed or are committed;
- Malmesbury Community Area Remainder's indicative strategic housing requirement is 510 dwellings; 511 dwellings have been completed or are committed;
- Malmesbury Community Area's indicative strategic requirement is 1,395 dwellings; 1,553 dwellings have been completed or are committed.

3.16 In the circumstance where the strategic housing requirement for the Community Area and the HMA have been met, it is logical and sustainable for a more strategic allocations DPD such as the HSA not to identify further allocations, as set out in paragraph 4.15 of the July 2018 Topic Paper 2.

3.17 In the case of Crudwell, this means leaving the CNP to define and determine how best to meet local housing needs. This is why the CNP continues to propose to provide for the identified local need when there is no remaining strategic need for additional homes in the HMA or in the Community Area.

3.18 The CNP determines its local housing need based on a "bottom up" approach, with reference to the parish housing needs survey for example. The more "top down" approach described in the standard methodology for local housing need, for example, being based on national household projections as a starting point, is more relevant to determining the strategic housing requirement which, we emphasise, is already met in the Malmesbury Community Area.

3.19 As the strategic housing requirement for the Malmesbury Community Area is already met, the progress made with the CNP (as referred to in para 4.16 of the July 2018 Topic Paper 2) is less relevant because the CNP is not helping to meet a strategic housing need; it is meeting a local housing need.

3.20 Nevertheless, the CNP has reached regulation 14 and, as we note in section 2, the CNP progress to date helps to empower local people to shape their surroundings, which is one of the 2012 NPPF's Core Planning Principles, and that this is a consideration when determining whether the allocation of Ridgeway Farm would be "consistent with national policy" and therefore sound.

3.4 Are the differences between overall provision identified in the WHSAP and the WCS justified? Should any shortfalls in provision within particular settlements be compensated for with development in other locations?

3.21 In the context of the Malmesbury Community Area, it is more acceptable for Malmesbury to provide more homes than its indicative strategic requirement than it would be for the Community Area Remainder to do so, because Malmesbury is the most sustainable settlement in the Community Area.

3.22 There are no shortfalls in the Malmesbury Community Area so the second part of the question is not applicable.

Issue 4: Has the site selection process for housing allocations been soundly based?

3.23 In the context of the Malmesbury Community Area, no allocations are now proposed so there is no site selection process as such.

3.24 The lack of a proposed housing allocation in the Malmesbury Community Area is soundly based because the strategic housing need has been met in the Community Area.

3.25 Nevertheless, the CNP proposes to continue to meet local housing needs.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 As far as matter 3/issue 5 is concerned, this statement focusses on responding to the Inspector's additional question asking whether the deletion of the Ridgeway Farm site is necessary to make the HSA Plan sound.
- 4.2 Our response is that the deletion of this site is necessary to make the plan sound for two reasons.
- 4.3 The first is that its allocation would not be "justified" because there is no strategic need for it. The Community Area's housing target to 2026 has already been met and there is sufficient housing supply in the North and West Wiltshire HMA to ensure a 5 year housing supply up to and including 2025/26.
- 4.4 The second is that its allocation would not be "consistent with national policy" which includes "empowering local people to shape their surroundings".
- 4.5 A Crudwell Neighbourhood Plan is being produced which proposes to meet the identified local housing need despite there being no strategic need for more homes locally. This reached regulation 14 stage at the end of 2018.
- 4.6 When there is no strategic need for additional housing sites locally, it would not be consistent with national policy for Wiltshire's HSA Plan to allocate the Ridgeway Farm site because this would disempower local people to shape their surroundings.
- 4.7 We also take the opportunity to respond to matter 2 as we did not attend the matter 2 hearings on 2nd and 3rd April.