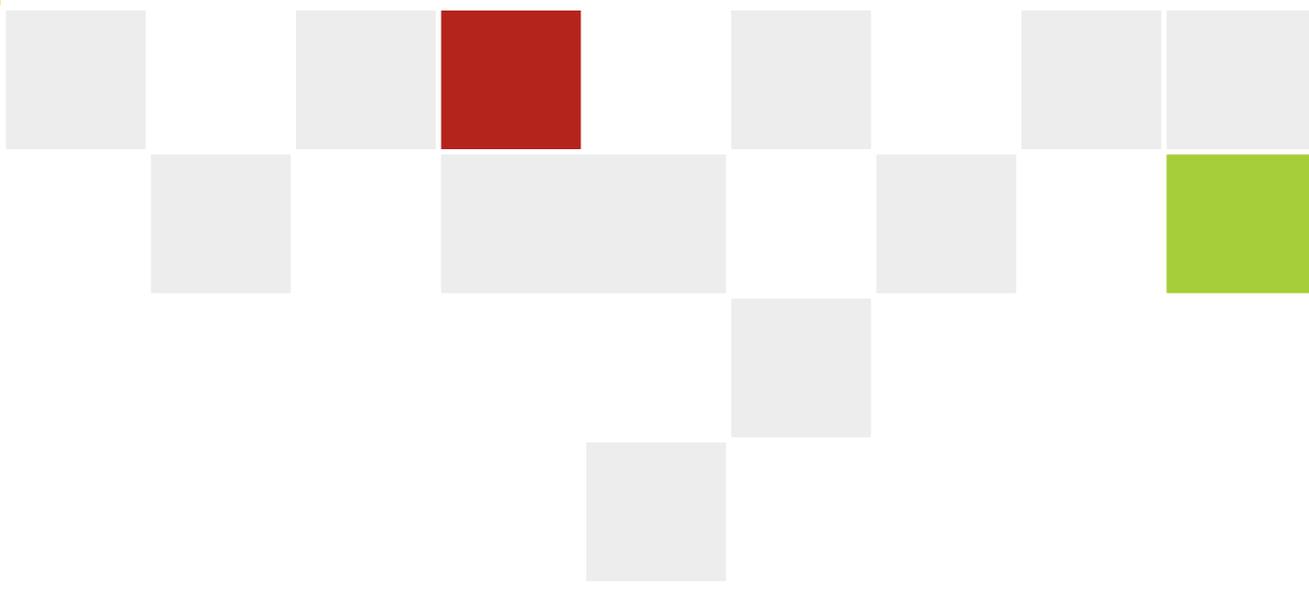


WHSAP Examination in Public



Matter 3 (South Wiltshire HMA) Hearing Statement



Boyer

Matter 3: Housing Site Allocations (South)

Boyer on behalf of Persimmon Homes

REP ID: 983136 / 1132230

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Boyer is instructed by Persimmon Homes (Wessex) and Persimmon Homes (South Coast) to submit Hearing Statements in response to the Inspector's Initial Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs).
- 1.2 This Statement is made in respect of Matter 3: Site Allocations and relates specifically to the allocations proposed at Salisbury. Whilst we seek to address the questions raised by the Inspector for this Matter, our concerns are founded in the approach taken by Wiltshire Council to the site allocations process including in respect of the Sustainability Appraisal. Fundamentally, we believe that this process is flawed and, as a consequence, the approach taken does not represent the most appropriate strategy for Salisbury.
- 1.3 Our Hearing Statements relating to Matters 1 and 2 set out our concerns and are not repeated here. We therefore respectfully ask that this Statement is read in conjunction with others submitted on behalf of Persimmon Homes.

2. LAND NORTH OF DOWNTON ROAD, SALISBURY

2.1 Persimmon Homes control a 13.5ha site to the north of Downton Road, Salisbury. This site has been considered through the Council's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) under the reference "S159". The SHELAA concluded that the site was suitable, available, achievable and deliverable for residential development.

2.2 Land north of Downton Road was also considered as part of the site selection process up to and including Stage 3. However, the site was at that Stage considered to be "less sustainable" given the number of moderate adverse effects that had been identified through the SA process.

2.3 We do not, at this stage, repeat our contention that the site assessment and SA processes are flawed but would refer the Inspector to our other Examination Statements for Matter 2. We would, however, respectfully ask the Inspector to note that detailed representations (dated September 2017) were submitted at Pre-Submission Stage in support of the site. These representations were specifically aimed at addressing the conclusions of the (then) site selection process and, as such, included for the site:

- A Concept Masterplan;
- An Ecological Appraisal;
- A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the Downton Road site
- A Comparative assessment of landscape and visual impacts of the proposed allocations at Netherhampton Road and the Downton Road site; and
- A Heritage Assessment

2.4 The Concept Masterplan is attached as Appendix 1 of this Statement and demonstrates the site's ability to accommodate 290 dwellings as well as 1.8ha site for a new primary school. The provision of the school was acknowledged by Wiltshire Council's Head of School Place Commissioning as "*in principle, a solution we could support*".

2.5 It appears evident that the detailed and objective information submitted on behalf of our client has not been given due consideration by the Local Planning Authority. For example, Annex 1 A.5 Salisbury Principal Settlement) of the June 2017 Sustainability Appraisal Report (document PSCON 09A.6) states in respect of SA Objective 9:

"A site for a new primary school, ideally of at least 1.8ha that could accommodate up to 2 forms of entry (420 pupils), may be required either onsite or in the vicinity of this site for any development to proceed. Provision of land for a new primary school on this site is considered unlikely given the size of the site and anticipated number of dwellings that could be delivered, and a site elsewhere may need to be found." (Boyer emphasis).

2.6 The May 2018 Sustainability Appraisal Report (document SA 01 A6) states

“A site for a new primary school, ideally of at least 1.8ha that could accommodate up to 2 forms of entry (420 pupils), may be required either onsite or in the vicinity of this site for any development to proceed. At the current time, there are no details of any such provision planned for this site and further information would be required. Provision of land for a new primary school on this site is considered unlikely given the size of the site and anticipated number of dwellings that could be delivered, and a site elsewhere may need to be found.”

2.7 The detailed supporting information submitted at Pre-Submission stage therefore, at best, appears to have been disregarded thus preventing a full and objective reassessment of the suitability of the site. Indeed, we would respectfully suggest that the location of a new primary school on the land north of Downton Road is a major benefit in terms of SA objectives 9 (reducing poverty/deprivation and promoting more inclusive and self-contained communities) and 10 (reducing the need to travel). In respect of Objective 9, we believe that had the pre-submission representations been properly considered, this would have removed the suggestion of a “moderate adverse” effect thus allowing the site to progress to Stage 4 of the SA.

2.8 We fully understand that, at this stage, the Examination is not considering omission sites, however, the Inspector is respectfully asked to note our position in respect of Matter 2 (issue 2.4) that the Plan does NOT make adequate overall provision to ensure the delivery of the minimum housing requirement set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

2.9 It is our opinion therefore that the Plan is unsound on the basis that it does not ensure the minimum required amount of development and that the preferred allocations at Salisbury do not, in any event, represent the most appropriate strategy for the Plan period.

3. MATTER 3: ISSUE 5

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

- 3.1 Notwithstanding our concerns on the site selection process and the SA, we have specific concerns on the proposed allocation of the following sites:
- Policy H3.1 –Land at Netherhampton Road, Salisbury
 - H3.3 – North of Netherhampton Road, Salisbury
- 3.2 Our Statement (below) sets out our concerns on a site by site basis, cross referring where possible to the detailed issues/questions raised by the Inspector

4. POLICY H3.1 – NETHERHAMPTON ROAD

Issue 5.1 - Does the plan provide sufficient detail on form, scale, access and quantity of development for each site;

Issue 5.2 - Is the amount of development proposed for each site justified having regard to any constraints and the provision of necessary infrastructure; and

Issue 5.18 - is the policy sufficiently clear about the mix of development, in particular what would be expected in terms of employment land and a local centre?

- 4.1 Paragraph 5.130 of the WHSAP advises that the allocation of this site finds its roots in the preceding Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) as a site that should be considered if further land is required to meet housing requirements. In reality, the reason that a site of the scale being proposed at policy H3.1 is being brought forward through the current Examination is that the Council have failed to deliver on the long-term commitment and aspiration to redevelop the Churchfields employment area which is a strategic allocation in the WCS.
- 4.2 WHSAP paragraph refers to paragraph 5.112 of the WCS which refers to “Topic Paper 19” as the basis for any future consideration of Netherhampton. Given that there is not a Topic Paper 19 relating to the WCS, it would appear the Paper 19 referred to was in support of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy. If so, the basis of the Netherhampton Road site is some eleven years old and written in the context of a different planning policy framework.
- 4.3 In addition, the Inspector is asked to note that, for the strategic sites actually allocated (rather than just referred to) in the WCS, Appendix A of that Plan sets out detailed Development Templates the purpose of which includes mitigating any associated impacts.
- 4.4 The absence of such a template, together with the lack of clarity and certainty as to what the mix of uses will be across the site makes assessing the impacts of the allocation difficult. For example, in terms of the employment quantum to be delivered on the site, paragraph 5.132 states that:

“The site will include an element of employment alongside other uses. Evidence does not suggest a specific quantum of employment land. The site has a strategic role as a possible destination for the relocation of businesses to allow the redevelopment of the Churchfields strategic allocation of the WCS. A scale and form of employment would be a matter for discussion with relevant stakeholders as a part of preparing a masterplan for the site but would be delivered in the form of serviced land.” (Boyer emphasis).

- 4.5 Issue 5.18 questions whether the policy is sufficiently clear about the mix of development, in particular what would be expected in terms of employment land and a local centre. We have set out our position in respect of the employment land above.

- 4.6 Other than the fourth bullet point of H3.1, there is no further reference to the local centre. There is therefore no clarity for example in respect of what uses will be provided, the phasing/delivery of the centre and, fundamentally, how big it will be. Further there is no comment or guidance as to the location of the local centre within the development area and whether, for example, it could benefit site H3.3.
- 4.7 At this point in time, there can be no confidence as to what the local centre will provide in terms of services and facilities or whether it will ever be delivered.
- 4.8 Therefore, in respect of issues 5.1, 5.2 and 5.18, we do not consider that the Plan provides sufficient detail on the Netherhampton Road (H3.1) site or that it is sufficiently clear about the mix of development. Likewise, and linked to the absence of detail on employment and local centre uses, we do not believe that the Plan appropriately demonstrates or justifies the amount of development proposed, or indeed its ability to deliver.
- 4.9 Our response to issue 5.3 (below) also highlights areas which also question whether the site is capable of being delivered as relied upon.

5. ISSUE 5: QUESTION 5.3

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:

Green Infrastructure

- 5.1 We note that it is proposed that H3.1 will include a Country Park of at least 10ha to be located in the east and south of the site. It is assumed that the Country Park is intended to effectively operate as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) given references in paragraph 5.135 of the WHSAP, however, there is little detail on the exact form, nature and function of the Park.
- 5.2 On this basis and the uncertainties over the form of the overall development, it is difficult to predict with any confidence whether it will provide meaningful mitigation and/or benefits to enable the allocation to come forward.

Landscape Quality and Character

- 5.3 Representations made at pre-submission stage on behalf of Persimmon Homes included both an LVIA for our clients' site north of Downton Road and a report comparing the landscape impacts of both that site and H3.1.
- 5.4 The comparative assessment noted that H3.1 would protrude into the open countryside without any clear boundaries to the south and west and that development on H3.1 would be prominent in views from the surrounding landscape. It therefore requires substantial landscape mitigation to contain any development to the south and west and limit the effects on local landscape character.
- 5.5 It was also found that development on H3.1 would be visible from a number of public rights of way, both within and beyond the site, with little in the way of existing boundary features to screen views. Substantial mitigation planting would therefore be required to reduce the prominence of development in the landscape.
- 5.6 The conclusion is that development at H3.1 would be more visually prominent in the landscape than at Downton Road and would give rise to greater adverse effects on the surrounding visual amenity of a number of sensitive views from public rights of way.

Heritage Assets

- 5.7 Again, we note that paragraph 5.134 of the Plan states:

“The site includes prehistoric barrows, field systems and enclosures and very high archaeological potential. However, the site is large and the exact extent of work is uncertain. Investigations should inform a master plan for the site and an archaeological assessment would be required to support a subsequent planning application.”

- 5.8 Whilst understanding that more detailed work will be carried out at planning application stage, having acknowledged that there is *“very high archaeological potential”*, we are of the opinion that further work is required at the plan making stage to demonstrate that the allocation is sound and is achievable and deliverable.
- 5.9 This concern is heightened further given that the Plan relies on significant housing numbers on this site during the five year period and the linkages to the redevelopment of Churchfields. The level of information available for this site is, in our opinion, does not bear comparison with that submitted by Persimmon at Regulation 19 Stage in support of land north of Downton Road.

Strategic and local infrastructure including transport, the efficient operation of the transport network and highway safety.

- 5.10 Again, we are concerned as to the absence of detail provided in the Plan in this regard. Given the scale and nature of the proposed allocation, it is acknowledged at paragraph 5.136 that *“comprehensive improvements to the local and strategic road network would be necessary to safely accommodate development where the residual cumulative impacts are severe. Accordingly, contributions towards these improvements will likely be sought.”*
- 5.11 There is, however, no firm detail as to what these “comprehensive” measures may be, how they will be funded and what their phasing will be in order to assess the soundness and deliverability of the proposed allocation. For example, should these measures have to be in place prior to commencement of development, this may raise significant questions as to first completions being delivered as relied upon in 2021/2022 (Housing Land Supply Statement, March 2018).

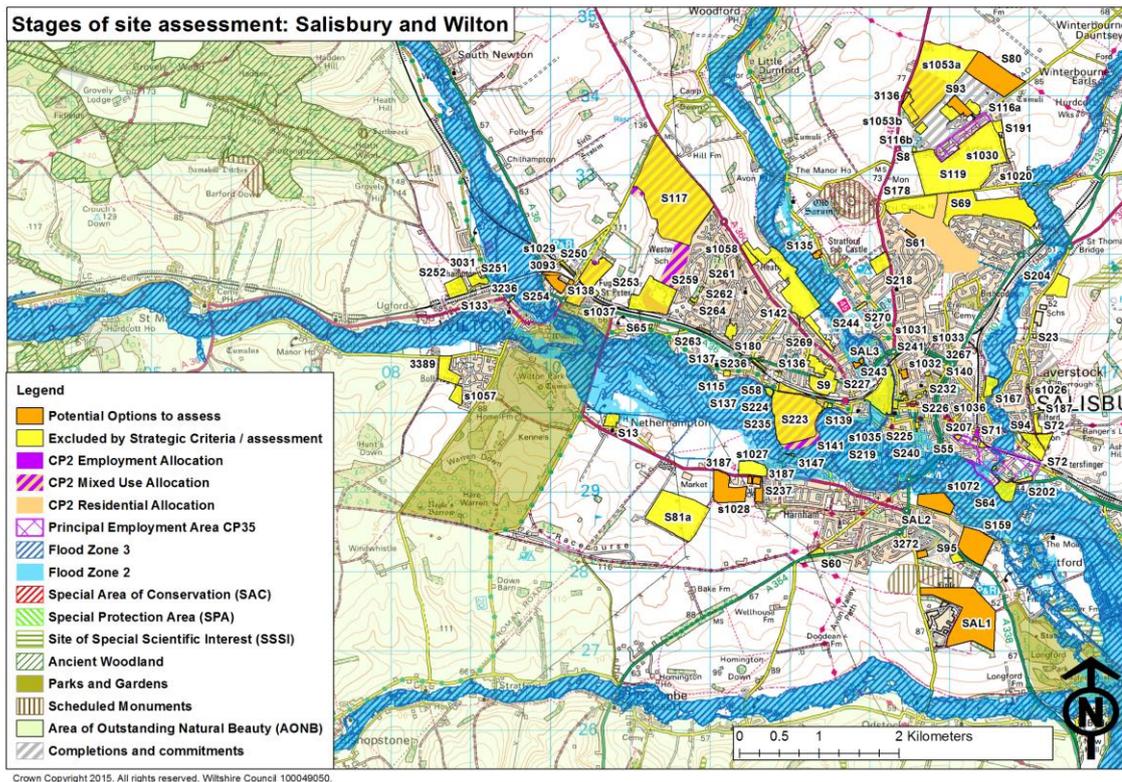
6. CONCLUSION – H3.1 LAND AT NETHERHAMPTON ROAD

- 6.1 In conclusion the fact that significant aspects of the allocation are not yet known, specifically the quantum and nature of employment land to be provided and the nature of the local centre, raises significant issues as to the timing, achievability and deliverability of the site. Therefore in response to issue 5 as a whole, and issue 5.18 specifically, we do not consider that the policy is sufficiently clear or effective.
- 6.2 Given that the Plan relies on this site to deliver 70% of the total emerging and adopted Site Allocations Plan allocations, any failure to deliver will have serious implications for the supply of new homes. The Council should therefore positively plan to allocate additional site(s) to ensure that the housing requirement is met.

7. H3.3 – NORTH OF NETHERHAMPTON ROAD

Issue 5.7 - 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?

- 7.1 Despite being a site identified to accommodate 100 dwellings, it is not subject to an actual allocation policy in the same manner as others in the Plan. The absence of a formal policy and the lack of detail in the text, is in our opinion confusing and adds to the overall vagueness on the proposals for the site in a manner that goes beyond presentation. The Council should be asked to explain the inconsistent approach adopted.
- 7.2 The identification of the land to the north of Netherhampton Road as being appropriate for development appears to have come at a fairly late in the site identification process. It is important to note, however, that the site was actually considered, and rejected, at the outset. We set out below an extract from the Housing Site Allocations Informal Consultation (February 2015).



- 7.3 The site is clearly identified as reference s1027 and had been “Excluded by Strategic Criteria/assessment”. Strategic Criteria includes, amongst other factors, land within Flood Zone 2 or 3. We cover the flooding point below.

8. ISSUE 5.6

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?

- 8.1 Representations submitted on behalf of Persimmon Homes at Pre-Submission stage included a comparison of the accessibility of the Netherhampton Road sites with that of the land north of Downton Road. This is attached for ease of reference as Appendix 2 but includes the following:

Service/Facility	Distance from Land North of Downton Road	Distance from Netherhampton Road Sites
Local Shop	710m	3.2km
City Centre	2.5km	4.2km
Tesco Superstore	3.3km	5.1km
Salisbury Railway Station	3.2km	4.9km

- 8.2 Again, we are aware that, at this stage, the Inspector is not considering omission sites. That said, we would respectfully ask for it to be noted that the land north of Netherhampton Road relies on H3.1 for access to some facilities, notably the proposed new primary school and local centre.
- 8.3 We have noted above our concerns as to the deliverability of H3.1 particularly in terms of the lack of certainty on any employment uses and the lack of detail on the local centre. Therefore, should site H3.1 not come forward as anticipated, the land North of Netherhampton Road would not be able to benefit from its services and facilities.

9. ISSUE 5.12

The supporting text for sites H2.4, H2.5, H2.6, H2.9 and H3.3 refers to parts of the sites being within Flood Zones 2 and/or Flood Zones 2 and 3? Is this approach consistent with national policy? Will the plan be effective in addressing drainage issues on these sites?

9.1 Appendix F of the Salisbury Community Area Topic Paper (CATP.13) summarises the SA by stating in respect of H3.3) *“The site is located fully in Flood Zone1 however is adjacent to Flood Zones 2/3”*.

9.2 However, the Proposed Change to paragraph 5.143 makes the following amendment:

“The extent of possible flood risks areas will need to be carefully surveyed so that development avoids them. A detailed flood risk assessment would be required in order to identify a set of appropriate sustainable drainage measures. Part of the site lies within Flood Zone 2 and hence development proposals will need to be sequentially planned and supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (incorporating an assessment of the predicted effects of climate change). In addition, development proposals will need to be supported by a comprehensive drainage strategy to address issues of surface water flooding.” (PC 105 – Boyer emphasis).

9.3 The change proposed under PC105, in our opinion, raises significant concerns as to the robustness of the SA and also the principal of development on this site. As stated in the Proposed Change, the fact that the site is partly with Flood Zone 2 means that the Sequential Approach should be applied at the plan making level and an alternative site within Flood Zone 1 be identified. Our client’s site North of Downton Road, as shown on the master plan at Appendix 1, is within Flood Zone 1.

APPENDIX 1: DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – LAND AT DOWNTON ROAD



0 20 40 60 80 100 metres

Site boundary: 13.45ha

Potential residential area: 7.85ha
Approx. 290 dwellings @ 37 dph

Potential site for primary school: 1.80ha

Potential public open space: 3.80ha

Existing vegetation

Proposed landscaping

Potential location for children's play areas

Potential location for SuDS feature

Potential vehicular access points

Public Right of Way (PRoW)

Potential recreational route

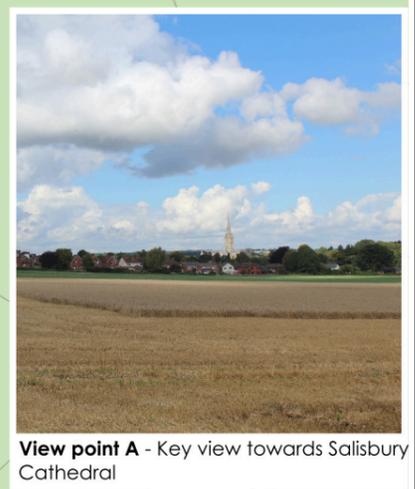
B	01/09/17	SM	Amended to reflect client's comments
A	12/08/16	CM	Site boundary amended
Rev	Date	By	Description

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Project	Land at Downton Road, Salisbury		
Title	Development Framework Plan DRAFT		
Client	Persimmon Homes		
Scale	1:2000 @ A3	Drawn	SeM
Date	June 2016	Checked	CS
Drawing No.	CSA/2808/104	Rev	B



APPENDIX 2: ACCESSIBILITY COMPARISON TABLE

- 4.2 A comparison of the accessibility of the sites proposed to be allocated at Netherhampton Road with the land north of Downton Road in terms of their accessibility to both existing and proposed facilities and services has been undertaken. The results of this analysis are shown below.

Facility/Service	Distance from Downton Road Site¹	Distance from Netherhampton Road Sites
Local Shop ²	710m/950m	3.2km
City Centre (Market Place)	2.5km	4.2km
Tesco Superstore	3.3km	5.1km
Primary School ²	0m	0m
South Wilts Grammar School for Girls	4.1km	5.7km
Salisbury Sixth Form College	2.2km	3.9km
Salisbury Railway Station	3.2km	4.9km
Salisbury District Hospital	1.8km	4.2km

- 1 Distance measured from centre of site to nearest facility or service
- 2 Nisa|Local on Rowbarrow/ Marks and Spencer at BP Garage on Downton Road and One Stop on Netherhampton Road
- 3 Primary schools proposed on both land north of Downton Road and land at Netherhampton Road