

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We write on behalf of EA Strategic Land LLP (EA Strategic) in response to the Inspector's Matters and Issues in relation to the Examination of the submitted Maldon Local Development Plan (LDP). EA Strategic has previously made representations to the draft LDP, at both the initial draft LDP and pre-submission consultations, and attended the Exploratory Meeting on 3 July 2014.
- 1.2 EA Strategic is a strategic land fund that is has been working with landowners of land to the north east of North Fambridge. It has engaged positively and pro-actively with the LDP preparation process, and would wishes to further constructively contribute to the preparation of both the LDP and Rural Allocations DPD (RADPD) to ensure that the District has adopted development plan which is both justified and effective.
- 1.3 This statement does not seek to repeat existing information already provided in representations, but draws on additional information since the submission of the previous representations and the Exploratory Meeting and in response to the Matters and Issues identified by the Inspector.
- 1.4 These representations respond to Matters 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8 as they relate to matters to which EA Strategic has addressed in previous representations. Accordingly, these representations only provide responses to questions where it is considered necessary and relevant to do so.

## 2. MATTER 1: LEGAL COMPLIANCE, INCLUDING THE DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

### Response to Issue 1: Whether the Plan is legally compliant

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- 2.1 The submitted LDP suffers from a number of shortcomings that result in a failure to comply with the tests of legal compliance.

#### Questions 1 and 2

- 2.2 The submitted LDP fails to address the requirements of national policy, primarily in relation to the requirement to meet the objectively assessed needs (OAN) for the district. To avoid duplication, the written statement in relation to Matter 2 explores this issue in detail.

#### Question 3

- 2.3 In addressing the requirements of the NPPF the plan should be accompanied by evidence of the full OAN, evidence of the specific deliverable sites sufficient to address its housing requirements (once these have been established) and evidence as to how the needs of different groups in the community (including, but not limited to those listed in paragraph 50 of the NPPF) are to be addressed. In addition, the plan should be informed by an NPPF compliant Strategic Housing Market Assessment (noting that the 2014 SHMA falls significantly short of that required by the NPPF) and an up-to-date Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

- 2.4 For the reasons set out in Section 3 of this report, it is not considered that the NM Strategic Solutions (NMSS) report provides a robust and defensible assessment of OAN. The Inspector will be mindful of the conclusions of his fellow Inspector at Uttlesford in relation to the matter of housing need and the analysis of the appropriate household formation rates; necessary adjustments to address affordable housing needs, employment issues and market signals; and the implications of these on the assessment of OAN.

#### Question 5

- 2.5 As presented to the committee report to the Planning and Licensing Committee on 9 July 2013 and Full Council on 11 July 2013 the Council reviewed several settlements, including North Fambridge to accommodate sufficient land to allocate a minimum additional 700 additional dwellings within the District. This is confirmed within paragraph 7.2.6 of the Sustainability Appraisal as submitted in support of the LDP.

- 2.6 The Sustainability Appraisal, at Table 5 of Appendix D considers that additional growth in North Fambridge would deliver overall benefits. Specifically, it states that:

*'The creation of a larger settlement will likely support the development of service provision in that area of the District over time.'*

*'The creation of a larger settlement close to an existing area of development and near a rail line is likely to reduce rural isolation and create a viable community.'*

*'The further provision of housing on the boundary of existing settlements is considered to be an effective use of land.'*

*'An increase in housing in North Fambridge may improve the local economy as it will increase the potential workforce for employers. In addition the creation of a larger settlement in the south [of the District] could in the long term also benefit the local economy.'*

2.7 The Draft LDP (August – October 2013) proposed 75 dwellings at North Fambridge. Appendix 6, which considered development of between 75 – 700 dwellings at the settlement states that:

*'A higher level of growth in North Fambridge would provide greater potential for developer contributions to include appropriate SuDS measures, healthcare facilities, education facilities, a greater amount of affordable housing, a local centre, and open space.'*

*'The train station at North Fambridge provides the opportunity for sustainable methods of transport for local residents.'*

2.8 Whilst the benefits of additional housing at other locations are set out in the Sustainability Appraisal, these have not been explored sufficiently in terms of developing planning policy.