



Examination of the Maldon District Council Local Development Plan

**Matter 7: Rural
Housing (including
North Fambridge)
and Settlement
Boundaries S2, S7
and S8**



INTRODUCTION

1. This Statement is made on behalf of MAZ Homes, as a formal response to the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions for Matter 7: Rural Housing (including North Farnbridge) and Settlement Boundaries. MAZ Homes is promoting the land at Church Road, Wickham Bishops (SHLAA ref site 5002) as a sustainable residential development of c.94 dwellings.
2. This Statement responds to the Inspectors questions 1, 3, 4 and 5 in respect of Matter 7 Issue 1 and should be read in conjunction with our previous representations.

QUESTION 1

3. We do not consider the overall distribution of development in Policy S2 and S7 is appropriate, and would refer the Inspector to paragraphs 14 to 32 of our previous representations, wherein we analyse this aspect in more detail.

QUESTION 3

4. The updated Housing Trajectory in document SD04b shows Rural Allocations delivering from 2016 onwards, with a (proportionately) significant delivery rate in 2017 and 2018. We believe this is not a realistic assumption, given that the Plan is unlikely to even be adopted before 2016. In order for the sites to be delivered, the Plan must be in place (2016/2017), planning permissions granted (2017 onwards) and then developments to commence (late 2017/early 2018). The Trajectory appears to assume that delivery will commence the same year that the Plan is adopted (presuming it is adopted in 2016), which is not our experience elsewhere.
5. The Trajectory should be amended to reflect this, with Rural Allocations delivery commencing one year later (as a maximum). However, if the Plan were to be amended in line with our representations to Matter 6, wherein the land at Church Road, Wickham Bishops (SHLAA site 5002) be allocated as a Reserve Site, pending allocation in the Rural Sites and Allocations Plan, then this could allow for the Trajectory to remain in such a fashion, improving the Council's five year supply of deliverable housing land.

QUESTION 4 and 5

6. We have consistently questioned the logic of allocating 75 dwellings to North Farnbridge, a "smaller village", within the plan, particularly given that there are no allocations for the "larger villages" such as Wickham Bishops. Our previous representations (March 2014) set out these arguments in more detail, and how, as a result, the plan is not sound (paragraphs 17 to 20).



7. Allocations of this scale should go to larger settlements first, which have the services and facilities appropriate to this scale of development. If those settlements are not capable of sustainably accommodating such growth, only then should other settlements lower down the hierarchy be considered.
8. In this instance, no such assessment has been done – instead being left for the Rural Sites and Allocations Plan. However, the North Fambridge allocation is proposed at this stage, with little or no rationale. The Plan states in paragraph 2.91 that the allocation is only due to the proximity to other settlements and their services. The result is an allocation for one settlement that is reliant upon other settlements to meet its needs – something that is contrary to the Core Planning Principles in the NPPF.
9. Furthermore, neither the Plan nor the evidence base show that the allocation can be supported by the services and facilities in these adjoining settlements (NPPF paragraph 55). In fact the evidence base and representations to the Plan instead identify potential significant infrastructure constraints in relation to the proposed allocation which surely questions the viability and deliverability (in particular in the 5 year period) of the allocation.
10. As per our previous representations, Policy S2 and S7 should therefore be amended to allocate the growth to the “larger villages” – in particular Wickham Bishops.