Landscape Rebuttal Statement

Land East of Hardingstone Appeal
PINS Reference:
APP/V2825/A/14/222886

Date: 09/06/15
Ref: INF_N0300_RS_01
Prepared by Sara Howe
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Appendices

Appendix 1 Supporting Figures

Figures within Appendix 1- Illustrative figures prepared by me using representative viewpoints submitted by LDA, to show extent of development on land to the east of the Appeal site as proposed in the Indicative Development Framework Plan prepared by Martin Grant Homes

| INF_N0300 | RVP003 | Representative Viewpoint 3 |
| INF_N0300 | RVP005 | Representative Viewpoint 5 |
| INF_N0300 | RVP015 | Representative Viewpoint 15 |
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| INF_N0300 | PM015  | Photomontage Viewpoint 15 |
1 Introduction

1.1 This rebuttal statement has been prepared in response to certain points raised in the Proof of Evidence (PoE) prepared by Philip Brashaw of LDA Design on behalf of the Appellant. I have structured this rebuttal statement with reference to those sections of Mr Brashaw’s evidence on which I wish to comment; however, where I do not respond to a particular section of Mr Brashaw’s evidence, that is no indication that I accept the points made.

1.2 To support this rebuttal statement, I have made graphic representations on viewpoints submitted by Mr Brashaw in his Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and the Landscape Statement of Common Ground (LSoCG). These are in Appendix 1. For clarity, the red lines I have drawn on the viewpoints are not intended to indicate the height of the proposed development.
2 Paragraph 6.7 and the additional land to the east of the appeal site

2.1 At paragraph 6.7.1 of his evidence Mr Brashaw acknowledges that the Masterplan for the appeal site was designed before the SUE was extended to the east and that the additional land to the east (the Additional Land) is being promoted by Martin Grant Homes and Harcourt Developments.

2.2 A separate planning application (accompanied by the requisite technical supporting documents) will be required for the Additional Land (see CD45 at paragraph 5.9). It is my understanding that no such planning application has yet been submitted. However, Mr Brashaw has provided the Indicative Development Framework Plan (IDFP) which was submitted to the WNJCS examination by the promoters of the Additional Land in Appendix 5 to his PoE.

2.3 Influence Environmental Ltd assessed the Additional Land as part of its Landscape Sensitivity and Character Assessment (LSCA): see paragraphs 4.27 to 4.35 of the LSCA. The LSCA identified two distinct areas within the Additional Land: (i) the area outside the appeal site but within the N6 allocation, directly to the east of LCZ C and within Northampton Borough; and (ii) the area within the N6 allocation to the southeast of The Green, within South Northamptonshire. These areas are shown on N0300_PL02 Local Character Zone Analysis and are referred to below as Area 1 and Area 2 respectively.

2.4 The strong rural landscape of Areas 1 and 2 is shown clearly in Representative Viewpoint 13 [Centre] together with the interconnecting views which are a key feature of the landscape character of this area. I understand from Mr Brashaw that Area 2 was previously a landfill site, however I do not consider that this previous use detracts from the present countryside character of that area.

2.5 Illustrative Viewpoint 1[Right] taken from Newport Pagnell Road looking east again demonstrates the rural context to the east of the appeal site and the topography of Area 2.

2.6 The LSCA reached the following conclusions in relation to Area 1 and Area 2:

  - Given the strong rural connections and relatively enclosed nature of the site ... Area 1 is likely to have a high sensitivity to development; and
  - Owing to its topography, residential development of Area 2 is likely to be difficult. It is likely to have a high sensitivity to such development given the

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1 Appendix 1 to the Proof of Evidence of Sara Howe.
2 LDA Appendix 14 Figure 9.13.
3 LDA Appendix 15 Dwg. No. 3943_IP_001_R.
uninterrupted views across the landscape and the prominence of the area in local views of the countryside from the west.

2.7 As Mr Brashaw acknowledges, the Masterplan for the appeal site was designed before the Additional Land was included in the N6 allocation. The appeal site has therefore been designed without consideration or reference to potential future development on Areas 1 and 2. Mr Brashaw in paragraph 6.7.2 of his PoE seeks to address that issue by reference to his adaptations of the application Framework Plans.

2.8 However, paragraph 6.7.2 does not consider the suitability of the Additional Land for residential development in landscape and visual terms.

2.9 I consider that the development proposed for Area 1 in the IDFP would result in the complete loss of the Area's openness and rural character. Such a loss will be experienced in LCZ C, if the appeal scheme is brought forward; the development proposed for Area 1 would extend it further into the countryside. In combination with development on Area 2, The Green would lose all its rural character (at the south western end) and become completely enclosed by housing.

2.10 The development proposed for Area 1 would also impact upon views from the east as represented by VP15\(^4\), with the housing encroaching along The Green and increasing the prominence of the built form in the view from this direction.

2.11 When viewed from the footpath (KN6 within the appeal site) the proposed development on Area 2 would result in the loss of the countryside view and the area becoming dominated by built form. Due to the topography of Area 2, the housing as proposed in the IDFP would rise up the land and also sit along the ridgeline, even with proposed woodland planting.

2.12 It is likely that there would be views of the proposed development on Area 2 from the wider countryside to the east, as represented by VP3\(^5\), where currently Hardingham Lodge is the only built form in the view. It is also likely that the spread of development across Area 2 would be visible in closer views from the east, such as those from VP15\(^6\).

2.13 From the south around VP5 the spread of development would noticeably increase, filling the gap between the current edge of Wootton and Hardingham Lodge with built form\(^7\). Even taking into account the new Wootton Fields development which is under construction and if the appeal scheme were also brought forward, there would be a noticeable change in the extent of development into the countryside.

\(^4\) Appendix 1 - N0300_PM 015.

\(^5\) Appendix 1 – N0300_RVP 003.

\(^6\) Appendix 1 – N0300_RVP 015.

\(^7\) Appendix 1 – N0300_RVP 005.
2.14 Close views from the south represented by VP 17 would likely experience a large scale of effect from the development proposed for Area 2 in the IDFP, since built form is extended the full width of the view, beyond existing built form, development currently under construction and the appeal scheme.8

2.15 In my opinion, having regard to the above observations, the development proposed for the Additional Land in the IDFP would have a significant impact in landscape terms. Were Areas 1 and 2 to be built out as proposed in the IDFP, the Additional Land would encroach substantially into the countryside, extending the built edge significantly beyond both its existing location and its location should the appeal scheme be brought forward.

2.16 As to visual impact, the development proposed for the Additional Land would result in the loss of views across the rural edge of Hardingstone and Wootton. Furthermore, as I have explained above, it is likely that there would be an increased and significant effect on a greater number of receptors across a wider extent.

2.17 I also note that paragraph 12.46 of the supporting text to WNJCS Policy N6 requires "the potential for development within the SUE to impact on the skyline when viewed from the north and the east" to be taken into account and addressed within the masterplan for the site. I consider that the proposals for the Additional Land as set out in the IDFP fail to address this consideration in relation to effect on views from the east.

I have considered what development might be acceptable on the Additional Land. It seems to me that if development is to take place on the Additional Land, it should come forward only on the southern and western part of Area 2. That approach would ensure that the impact upon views from the east was limited. It would also reduce the degree of encroachment into open countryside and thus enable a greater sense of connection from the N6 allocation through to the countryside to the east. The approach would also be consistent with the comments I make at paragraph 6.5 of my main PoE as to the extent of development which could be appropriate within LCZ C.

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8 Appendix 1 – N0300_RVP 017
Appendix 1
Figures

| INF_N0300 | RVP003      | Representative Viewpoint 3 |
| INF_N0300 | RVP005      | Representative Viewpoint 5 |
| INF_N0300 | RVP015      | Representative Viewpoint 15|
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Representative Viewpoint 3 - Minor Road east of site (0.8km, east)

(Viewpoint referenced from LDA document
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Appendices
Volume II - Appendices 13 to 15
Figures and Photograph Panels
Drawing No. 3943_PP_003)

Area 2 = Representative of the approximate location of development proposed within Area 2 by the IDFP.
Representative Viewpoint 5 - Preston Deanery Road, near Quinton (2.5km, south)

(Viewpoint referenced from LDA document
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Appendices
Volume II - Appendices 13 to 15
Figures and Photograph Panels
Drawing No. 3943_PP_005)

Area 2 = Representative of the approximate location of development proposed within Area 2 by the IDFP.
Representative Viewpoint 15 - The Green West of Hardingstone Lodge
(Viewpoint referenced from LDA document
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Appendices
Volume II - Appendices 13 to 15
Figures and Photograph Panels
Drawing No. 3943_PP_015_L)

Area 2 = Representative of the approximate location of development proposed within Area 2 by the IDFP.
Representative Viewpoint 17 - Public Footpath KM1 West of The Grange
(Viewpoint referenced from LDA document
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Appendices
Volume II - Appendices 13 to 15
Figures and Photograph Panels
Drawing No. 3943_PP_017_C)

Area 2 = Representative of the approximate location of development proposed within Area 2 by the IDFP.
Area 1 - Representative of the approximate location of development proposed within Area 1 by the IDFP.

(Viewpoint referenced from LDA document Landscape SoCG Appendix 6 Drawing No. 3943_PM_15_YR1)