

**Statement of Common Ground (SoCG)  
Examination of Northampton Local Plan Part 2**

**Between (i) West Northamptonshire Council, the local planning  
authority; and  
(ii) Bastion Group (Bastion)**

**The Farm, The Green, Hardingstone, Northampton - LAA0204**

This SoCG has been prepared by the parties to address issues of deliverability in respect of the above-mentioned development.

It addresses the following deliverability indicators cited in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance:

1. The planning status of the site.
2. Any progress being made towards the submission of application(s) required to be granted before development may lawfully commence.
3. Any progress with site assessment work required for an application submission and / or before development may lawfully commence.
4. Any relevant information about financial viability affecting the commencement of development.
5. Any relevant information about site ownership and access constraints affecting site assessment or the commencement of development.
6. Any relevant information about infrastructure provision necessary to support / enable the development.

It also addresses other issues raised by the Inspectors appointed to examine the Local Plan.

**1. The planning status of the site**

Table 1 – Summary of planning status

Type	Status	Units	Notes
Allocation	Submission Version of Part 2 Plan	55 as amended by proposed main modifications MMOD04 and MMOD53	This site is allocated by Policies 13 and 38.

Phases with detailed permission – falling within part a<sup>1</sup>

None

Phases - falling within part b<sup>2</sup>

There is strong evidence that housing completions will commence on this site well within five years as indicated in the programme for delivery set out in Section 8 below.

**2. Any progress being made towards the submission of application(s) required to be granted before development may lawfully commence.**

A request by Bastion for pre-application advice from the local planning authority was submitted on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and validated on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The request was for the Council's views on whether an application for the whole site, just the allocated site, or a phased approach would be supported. A "virtual" pre-application meeting was held between the parties on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021; the Council's formal pre-application advice is due shortly.

**3. Any progress with site assessment work required for an application submission and / or before development may lawfully commence.**

Baseline work has been undertaken by the Bastion Group on: foul and surface water drainage; ecology; heritage; landscape; transport and ground conditions on the site. Bastion is in the process of commissioning further ecology surveys; a tree survey; landscape and visual impact assessment (over the winter period) and a geophysical survey of the site in preparation for the submission of a planning application as soon as practically possible in 2022.

**4. Any relevant information about financial viability affecting the commencement of development.**

A site-specific viability assessment has not been undertaken, however an all-plan viability assessment has been undertaken which would suggest that a policy compliant development would be viable, unless there are site specific abnormal costs. In support of this, Bastion has undertaken an initial assessment and no significant abnormals are anticipated.

**5. Any relevant information about site ownership and access constraints affecting site assessment or the commencement of development.**

Bastion controls this land and land adjoining it to the north (a further 1.7ha). Direct vehicular and pedestrian access can be gained from The Green, an adopted public highway. The provision of access to the site looks to be possible through the improvement of an existing access onto The Green using land in Bastion's control or land which is adopted public highway. A transport assessment will need to be submitted as part of any proposed planning application.

As Bastion has sole control over the total area of the proposed allocation [and additional land within the wider site] it is able to bring forward a planning application for residential development as soon as practically possible to expedite the delivery of new homes. The allocation is clearly available, suitable, achievable and deliverable, thereby meeting NPPF requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex 2 of the NPPF - definition of 'Deliverable'

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 2 of the NPPF - definition of 'Deliverable'

**6. Any relevant information about infrastructure provision necessary to support / enable the development.**

Access arrangements are set out in Section 5 above. There are no other known infrastructure or other constraints to development of the site.

**7. Natural environment matters including the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) and functionally-linked land**

The [Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Plan](#) (SUB08) notes that a very small part of the allocated site (no more than 28 m wide at its widest) is indicated as being optimal land for Golden Plover or Lapwing. The 2020-2021 ecology surveys of the site commissioned by the Bastion Group, consider this land to be completely unsuitable for wintering Golden Plover, but nevertheless it is agreed to be avoided for development. The rest of the site is not suitable habitat for either bird species.

It is acknowledged that, in common with all other sites within 3km of the SPA, the recreational impact of the development of this site for housing will need to be mitigated in accordance with the draft Mitigation Strategy by collecting Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) contributions.

**8. Deliverability assessment**

The programme for bringing the site forward is set out below. It should be noted that the figures marked with an asterisk have been included to take into account Bastion’s wider land holding which includes an additional 1.7ha of the site, which has not been assessed by the local planning authority, as it has not been allocated in the Plan, nor have the additional 45 dwellings been included in the trajectory.

Year	Number of Units	Notes
Future Delivery		
2021/2022	0	
2022/2023	25	
2023/2024	30	
2024/2025	25*	See additional comments below
2025/2026	20*	See additional comments below
2026/2027		
2027/2028		
2028/2029		
April 2029 onwards		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

**Additional comments**

Bastion’s landholding has an area of just under 4ha and a potential estimated capacity of 100 units. Bastion have been promoting the whole of its landholding for residential development (circa 100 dwellings) for some time and the emerging Local Plan Part II includes part of the site (c.2.17ha) as a

residential allocation (as per Policy 13 – site ref: 0204). Bastion’s representations to the July 2020 Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan Part II highlighted that the site in Bastion’s ownership in fact extended north beyond the area proposed to be allocated and could therefore accommodate a higher number of new homes - 100 units in total – which was the number of dwellings originally identified as the site capacity for site ref: 0204 by the Council. The area in the proposed allocation (LAA0204) has a capacity of c.55 units and is proposed to be modified in the Proposed Submission Version of the Part II Plan.



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Duncan Chadwick, BSc MSc MRTPI  
Managing Director  
Chadwick Town Planning Limited  
On behalf of: Bastion Land Limited

Dated: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021



Richard Wood  
Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy  
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pp. Jim Newton  
Assistant Director (Growth, Climate and Regeneration)  
On behalf of: West Northamptonshire Council

Dated: 4/11/2021