



Examination Statement

Grainger: Woodcroft Farm, respondent ref. 06/0642(B)

HAVANT BOROUGH

CORE STRATEGY

EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

EXAMINATION STATEMENT

Grainger plc

Submitted 24 August 2010

SESSION 5: STRATEGIC SITES

GRAINGER PLC REF: 06/0642(B)

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Introduction

This Examination Statement has been submitted on behalf of Grainger plc as part of the Examination in Public on the Havant Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (HBCS). The Statement highlights and where necessary expands upon the sustainability representation submitted by Grainger in May 2010 on the Core Strategy process. It does not repeat representations.

Q.17 Are the strategic sites justified, supported by sound evidence?

- 1.1 Savills support the strategy adopted by the Council in identifying sites central to the delivery of its spatial strategy within the submitted DPD. With regard to Woodcroft Farm, this work has been supplemented by supporting evidence commissioned by Grainger plc and agreement with Hampshire County Council concerning access provision from Eagle Avenue. Savills would contend therefore that the inclusion of Woodcroft Farm as a Strategic Site is 'justified' in terms of the requirements of PPS12.
- 1.2 The Hearing Statement addresses the Questions raised by the Inspector with regard to Woodcroft Farm, and supplements the information submitted previously as part of Savills' Pre-Submission representations.

22. Have cross boundary issues been resolved?

- 2.1 In advance of the Submission of the Havant Core Strategy, high level discussions were held with both Winchester City Council and East Hampshire District Council regarding the proposed allocation at Woodcroft Farm, and the future potential for this development to expand beyond the administrative boundaries. In respect of these boundaries, all three converge to the north of Wecock, with Woodcroft Farm extending into East Hampshire District, and Clarendon Farm located to the west within Winchester District.
- 2.2 The land identified within the Havant Borough Core Strategy can act as a stand alone Urban Extension, or facilitate the delivery of additional residential development to the north and west. It follows therefore that the delivery of the site identified within the Havant Borough Core Strategy is not reliant on any land to the north or west to come forward early in the Plan period for circa 340 dwellings.
- 2.3 The potential for this supplementary development to occur has been recognised within both the East Hampshire District and Winchester District emerging Core Strategies. Within the East Hampshire Preferred Option DPD, the Council state:

'The area to the south east of Horndean in the vicinity of Hazleton Farm and the area to the south west near Woodcroft Farm provide the most potential for new development [Para 4.111].

The Council is also aware of a strategic site at Woodcroft Farm which is emerging in the Havant Core Strategy. While the bulk of the development is in Havant Borough, it could be extended into East Hampshire and Winchester District. The Council will monitor this carefully. [Para 4.105]

- 2.4 Within the Winchester District Preferred Option DPD, the following reference is provided:

The Council is also aware of a strategic site at Woodcroft Farm, which is emerging in the Havant Borough Core Strategy. While the bulk of this development is in the Havant District, there may be potential for some development in Winchester District and some in East Hampshire. The Council will therefore work closely with adjoining Councils to prepare a robust planning framework for this area. [Para 6.14].

- 2.5 It is recognised that if either or both neighbouring Authorities wish to progress with such a strategy, then this will be a matter for the respective Core Strategy Review process and subsequent Examination in Public. At this point, any extension into East Hampshire or Winchester District would need to be tested against the alternatives, with wider social and physical infrastructure provision taken into account.
- 2.6 At present, neither neighbouring Authority has progressed to the point where such a strategy could be fully tested, and thus the delivery of Woodcroft Farm within Havant Borough is not reliant on any adjacent land to deliver residential development during the Plan period. During the Planning Application process for the land within Havant Borough, further discussions with both neighbouring Authorities will take place to ensure that any possible expansion is allowed for through the internal road alignment and built form.

22. Is the location sustainable?

- 3.1 Woodcroft Farm benefits from close proximity to a range of local services and facilities within the wider Wecock area. (See Appendix 3). Within walking and cycling distance, is the Milton Road shopping precinct, with a range of convenience stores and the Wecock Community Centre (Acorn Centre) located to the south of the site. The proposed reconfigured Woodcroft Primary School is also sited immediately adjacent to the site.
- 3.2 There are two further local shopping precincts within 1.6km of the site. The first is Cowplain centre, which provides a wide range of facilities including banks, restaurants, optician, butcher, dentist and fitness centre. The second is Waterlooville town centre and is also within 2km of the site providing more extensive facilities, including supermarkets, clothes shops and general retail units.

- 3.3 The proposed development would further enhance the viability and vitality of these shopping areas. In view of the close proximity of the site to existing facilities, it is anticipated that the proposed development could generate a high proportion of local journeys by walking and cycling and therefore the Woodcroft Farm site provides a good opportunity to deliver sustainable development.
- 3.4 The site also benefits from excellent public transport connections, with the No.39 bus service running past the site along Eagle Avenue providing direct service to the Waterlooville Local Centre, Asda Supermarket and Havant Bus and mail line railway station. The No.40 service also provides direct links to Portsmouth and Southsea. As part of the reconfiguration of the access proposals from Eagle Avenue, new Bus Stops are proposed within safe pedestrian access from the development site. A full summary of the local existing services is provided at Figure 1.

Figure 1: Local Bus Services

Route Number	Nearest Stop	Route Description	Service Frequency (mins)		
			Weekday Peak	Weekday Daytime	Weekend
39	Eagle Avenue	Wecock Farm – Waterlooville – Havant	15	15	15 (Sat) 60 (Sun)
40		Wecock Farm – Waterlooville – Hilsea – Southsea	15	15	20
X40		Wecock – Southsea	School Service – 2 morning services		-
300W		Denmead – Emsworth - Chichester	2 buses per day (Wednesday only)		-
45 / 45A	Sunnymead Drive	Portsmouth – Hilsea – Cosham – Waterlooville – Hambledon	30	30	30 (Sat)
138		Waterlooville – Fareham	1 am and 1 pm peak service		-
37	Cowplain Shops	Liss – Petersfield – Clanfield – Waterlooville – Havant	90	60	60 (Sat)
41		The Hard – Hilsea – Cosham – Waterlooville – Clanfield	15	15	20

- 3.5 As part of the Planning Application process, the delivery of the site will benefit from a comprehensive Travel Plan to aid in the promotion of non car journeys and the existing public transport connections that pass the site along Eagle Avenue.

22. Can proper access be achieved?

4.1 From the outset of the promotion of Woodcroft Farm through the Havant LDF process, discussions have been held with Hampshire County Council regarding the ability to access the site from Eagle Avenue through the existing school grounds. As part of the reconfiguration of the school, HCC are preparing a planning application for the disposal of part of the grounds for residential development, with land reserved on the western flank for suitable access road to the strategic site.

4.2 As part of these proposals which are detailed within the Statement of Common Ground submitted between Grainger plc and HCC Assets and Development Section, land will be made available within the strategic site to facilitate a new playing pitch for the school, and the diversion of the bridleway for safe and secure access for the education facility to the new pitch. Havant Borough Council have been kept informed of these discussions during the process, and all parties are content that a suitable access can be achieved. Further details of the access proposals are provided within Appendix 2 to this Statement and within the aforementioned Statement of Common Ground.

22. Can the proposal support adequate infrastructure and affordable housing?

5.1 Grainger plc own the freehold of the land identified within the Core Strategy and have planned accordingly for its delivery in respect of securing access through Hampshire County Council land and the need to provide for suitable infrastructure provision.

5.2 Grainger plc is content that delivery of the Strategic Site as proposed within the Core Strategy is financially viable. In part, this assurance comes from the revised wording of the Core Strategy in respect of the Affordable Housing Policy, and no specific onerous requirements placed on the site within the Strategic Site Profile. Such flexibility required by PPS12 will aid in the delivery of the site for market and affordable dwellings.

5.3 Further work in consultation with Officer's and the community during the Planning Application stage will refine the process and identify any suitable and appropriate measures and objectives to be included within the associated legal agreement. With regard to wider infrastructure requirements, the following section of this Statement sets out the work completed to date during the Pre-Application Stage, and further details on the site and proposed development.

Site Specific Information and Infrastructure

Off Site Highway Works

- 6.1 To inform the Core Strategy promotion and future planning application, Grainger plc commissioned a Traffic Assessment (TA) of the strategic site at Woodcroft Farm, based on a residential scheme of 360 dwellings. With the Core Strategy identifying approximately 340 dwellings, the Assessment is based on a slightly higher capacity. The TA prepared by Peter Brett Associates followed a Scoping Report set to Hampshire County Council Highways Department, and has been informed by utilising the agreed baseline scenario and model for the MDA prepared by Mayer Brown and validated by the Highways Agency, to ensure a consistent base on the surrounding road network.
- 6.2 The results of the TA show that the traffic generation from the Woodcroft Farm development has a marginal impact on the operation of the local junctions and that generated traffic flows can be accommodated on the surrounding road network with limited mitigation. Junction improvements may be required when the committed and future Waterlooville MDA and Hampshire County Council residential development at Meadowlands are factored in. A summary of the mitigation measures that have been identified is provided below:
- Lovedean Lane / Milton Road Junction: Provision of mini-roundabout junction to replace existing priority junction.
 - Hambledon Road/Milton Road Roundabout: Possible localised widening to provide additional capacity (if required in the future);
 - Hambledon Road/Sunnymead Drive: the proposed signalised junction to the north and installation of a TOUCAN crossing to the south of the junction delivered with the committed MDA are likely to create gaps in the traffic to allow vehicles leave the minor arm of this junction.
- 6.3 The Woodcroft Farm development in isolation (tested at 360 dwellings) has limited impact of the transport networks. The development only results in significant impact at the Lovedean Lane / Milton Road junction, which can be readily upgraded to a mini-roundabout, the costs of which are not prohibitive.
- 6.4 The outputs from the emerging TA concern only the land within Havant Borough and provide an assessment of delivery up to 360 dwellings. Any future expansion of the Strategic Allocation into the neighbouring Authorities would need to be tested in its own right and any required mitigation measures implemented thereafter.

- 6.5 For the purposes of the future Woodcroft Farm Planning Application and to inform the EiP into the Core Strategy, the work commissioned and concluded to date does not demonstrate any 'show stoppers' to delivery in respect of off site highway works. The junction improvement costs are at an a reasonable level and through the appropriate checks do not show any third party land required to deliver the identified improvements.

Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk

- 6.6 Mapping from the Environment Agency's Web Site shows the site to lie within Flood Zone 1; *'land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year (<0.1%)*. The PUSH Strategic Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the site lies within Flood Zone 1 and that the site itself has not suffered from any historic groundwater flooding or flooding from Southern Water sewers.
- 6.7 As per the tests of vulnerability and sequential tests contained within PPS25, the use of the site for residential development is considered acceptable.
- 6.8 The proposed surface water drainage strategy will utilise SuDS to meet the discharge requirements of PPS25 and the mandatory elements of the Code for Sustainable Homes by maintaining the existing (greenfield) discharge rate from the site and managing the additional discharge volume. Following additional ground investigations if ground conditions are considered suitable infiltrating drainage techniques will be utilised to meet the required discharge and volume requirements.
- 6.9 If, as discussed, it is confirmed that the site's ground conditions are not considered suitable for infiltrating drainage techniques then attenuating SuDS such as lined permeable pavements and cellular storage will be utilised and the offsite discharge rate restricted appropriately. It is proposed that in this case discharge will be to the existing Southern Water sewer network. Southern Water has confirmed that once the proposed connection point or points are know, based on the proposed development layout, then a capacity check will be required to determine if capacity exists within the network, or whether reinforcement works are required.

Utilities

- 6.10 Through correspondence with Peter Brett Associates, Portsmouth Water has confirmed that there is no requirement for any off site reinforcement works to facilitate portable water to the development site for circa 360 dwellings. Whether any reinforcement works are required concerning foul sewerage will be established once the residential layout and capacity checks are completed.

Ecology

- 6.11 An Ecological Survey has been undertaken as part of the work to date. The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designation such as SSSI or SINCR. There are 16 non-statutory sites within 2 km of the site; the nearest of these is 'James's Copse and Outlier' Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCR) which is approximately 100m north of the northernmost point of the site.
- 6.12 While bats were identified on site as part of the initial survey, no conclusive evidence of bat roosting was found and no requirement to obtain a bat licence from Natural England was identified. However, it was recommended that a bat survey be undertaken of the existing buildings in advance of works commencing to allow for a Natural England licence to be sought should one be required.
- 6.13 With a number of mature hedges on site, the evolving masterplan has been formed to take into account the retention of these features where possible. Any clearance of vegetation, but particularly hedgerows, field edges and other more structurally diverse vegetation within the site will be timed to avoid the main bird nesting period (the nesting bird period typically runs from March to mid-August inclusive). Further ecological work will be undertaken in advance of the Planning Application stage.

Masterplan

- 6.14 To inform the Core Strategy promotion and form the basis for a future Planning Application, an illustrative layout of the residential development scheme is provided at Appendix 1 to this Statement. The emerging masterplan illustrates how a residential scheme of 340 dwellings could be delivered taking into account the requirement for a new pitch for Woodcroft Primary School, open space and childrens play areas.
- 6.15 The principal access is from Eagle Avenue, with opportunities for a secondary access off Woodcroft Lane serving a limited number of dwellings. Forming part of the masterplan is a new diverted bridleway on a north east axis, and the retention of principal hedgerows and trees within the site. Also show are possible connections to the north and west into the neighbouring Authorities should these areas be supported for future development.
- 6.16 The site can deliver a range of house types, with the onus on dwelling houses as opposed to flatted development. As shown, on the illustrative masterplan, the density of the development scheme ranges from 34 to 36 dwellings per hectare, but varies across the development site in respect of the various dwellings types.

Delivery

6.17 The delivery of the Woodcroft Farm Strategic Site has been set out within other Statements submitted to the Havant Core Strategy EiP. For reference, with a Planning Application approved in late Summer/ Autumn 2011, the following trajectory would apply:

- 2012/13 20 dwellings
- 2013/14 100 dwellings
- 2014/15 100 dwellings
- 2015/16 100 dwellings
- 2016/17 20 dwellings

6.18 To date, there has been no 'showstoppers' identified within the pre-application work undertaken, which would render the site unable to come forward for development. This work supports that undertaken by the Borough Council in assessing the deliverability of Woodcroft Farm to come forward. Further detailed work is required to inform the Planning Application process and formulate a final masterplan, however, for the purposes of the Examination in Public, it is contended that that the site is available, suitable and achievable and a sound inclusion within the Core Strategy as a Strategic Site.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Illustrative Masterplan and Associated Drawings
2. Eagle Avenue Junction Proposals
3. Services and Facilities Location Plan
4. Public Transport Network

END OF STATEMENT