

YORK LOCAL PLAN – MATTER 1

STRATEGIC SITE ALLOCATION SITE REF. ST14
LAND WEST OF WIGGINTON ROAD

TW FIELDS

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This hearing statement is written on behalf of TW Fields in **support** of York Local Plan strategic site allocation Ref. ST14 Land West of Wigginton Road.
- 1.2 TW Fields are one of two developers (along with Barratt Developments plc) promoting the delivery of the strategic site allocation Land to the West of Wigginton Road (Ref. ST14). The two developers are working in collaboration to promote the allocation of the site. This statement should be read alongside our previous submissions to the Local Plan.
- 1.3 Land to the West of Wigginton Road, referred to as the Clifton Gate Garden Village scheme, is identified as a Strategic Allocation in the submitted York Local Plan (ST14) to deliver a new sustainable Garden Village of a minimum of 1,348 new homes, alongside the delivery of significant community infrastructure in the form of a new primary school, a village centre, a health centre, affordable homes, elderly persons care homes, public open space, and recreational facilities. This Garden Village approach fully supports the Government's ambitions for Garden Villages.
- 1.4 The identified Vision of the Clifton Gate site is to deliver: -
- A new village with its own identity and good local facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents as the community grows over time. A new village which is well-connected to the centre of York and surrounding settlements by sustainable modes of transport but clearly separated and screened from existing settlements to avoid coalescence. A place that feels a part of York but is still a separate place.***
- 1.5 The Clifton Gate site is strategically located to the north of York, beyond the established boundary of the Outer York Ring Road. The site is separated from the existing urban edge and surrounding villages. The site's location respects the historic and landscape character of this area of the City.
- 1.6 The development proposals are situated in a suitable and highly sustainable location in respect of connectivity to existing jobs and services at Clifton Moor. Importantly, there are no technical or environmental (built and natural) constraints that would preclude the development of the site.
- 1.7 The Clifton Gate site will make a significant contribution to meeting the City's housing needs over the emerging Local Plan period.
- 1.8 The Local Plan supports a development of 1,348 homes at the site. Whilst TW Fields supports the principle of this allocation, they consider that the defined boundary of the site is unsound and have therefore proposed a number of expansion options for the scheme, which they consider to be viable and deliverable alternatives.
- 1.9 In making representations to the Local Plan the developers have presented three potential development options to the Council to provide a new Garden Village of either 1,350 homes; 1,725 homes; or 2,200 homes. The final resolution of the precise boundary of the new settlement will be determined at Phase 3 of the examination of the Local Plan.

- 1.10 Following a review of the Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan and the amended Evidence Base documents, the developer's stance has not changed. The proposed detailed boundaries of the site allocation should be expanded. The reasoning for which is provided within our previous submissions to the City of York Council and within our Phase 1 hearing statements.
- 1.11 Notwithstanding the above, it remains the developer's intention to work with the Council to agree a Statement of Common Ground ahead of the Phase 3 hearing sessions.
- 1.12 A masterplan which aligns with the Council's current proposed boundary for the site and which delivers each of the policy aspirations required by Policy SS12 of the Local Plan, has been prepared and was enclosed with the Phase 1 hearing statements. The masterplan identifies the following key elements:
- - 1,350 homes to be delivered by 2033
 - Up to 405 Affordable Homes & Extra Care Facilities
 - 10.25ha of public open space, green corridors and recreational facilities as part of the development proposals. Including new playing pitch provision.
 - Provision of a Two Form Entry Primary School & School Playing Fields
 - Health Centre & Village Centre
 - Key views to York Minster will be preserved and accessible green corridors will be placed within them.
 - The retention and enhancement of existing woodland, hedgerows and trees located within and surrounding the site. Providing landscape, visual and biodiversity enhancements.
 - The provision of substantial levels of new landscape planting within and surrounding the site. Providing landscape, visual and biodiversity enhancements.
 - Existing water features including ponds and streams will be incorporated into the development. New water features relating to a Sustainable Urban Drainage systems will also be delivered. These features will together form an integral aspect of the biodiversity benefits that the development can deliver. Equating to overall net biodiversity gain.
 - New walking and cycling routes will be provided in the form of a new pedestrian/cycle underpass connection at the Clifton Moor Roundabout Access and a new pedestrian/cycle footpath connecting the site's access on Wigginton Road to the Outer Ring Road. These connections will also make the site accessible to the wider York footpath and cycle network.
 - An existing public footpath connection between Clifton Moor and Skelton will be enhanced and made suitable for pedestrian/cycling connectivity. In doing so this will increase inter-activity between the Clifton Gate settlement and Skelton so that the two settlements can share their services and facilities. This proposal would have the benefit of increasing the sustainability of the existing settlement of Skelton as well.
 - Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the upgraded Clifton Moor roundabout, which will include a 4th access arm that solely serves the development site. A new access will also be provided from Wigginton Road to the east.
- 1.13 This statement seeks to respond to **Matter 1** of Phase 2 of the York Local Plan Examination in Public. For brevity, where possible we refer to our previously submitted Phase 1 Hearing Statement and

representations to the Council's Proposed Modification & Evidence Base consultation. These two documents are enclosed with this statement for ease of reference.

- 1.14 We respond below to each of the Inspector's specific questions in respect of the Local Plan's Strategic Vision, Outcomes and Development Principles.

HAS THE PLAN BEEN INFORMED BY AN ADEQUATE PROCESS OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT IN THIS REGARD?

- 2.1 TW Fields supports the approach undertaken by the Council in respect of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.2 As we have stated previously, the site has been identified as strategic housing site allocation ST14 within different iterations of the City of York Local Plan and its accompanying Sustainability Appraisal since June 2013. At that time, the Preferred Options Local Plan identified the site as having the potential to deliver 4,020 homes, along with the allocation of Safeguarded Land to the north of the allocation. The number of homes to be provided at the site was reduced to 2,800, along with an amendment to the red line site allocation boundary, within the now withdrawn City of York Publication Draft Local Plan (October 2014).
- 2.3 Prior to the withdrawal of the previous Publication Draft Local Plan (October 2014), the developers undertook and submitted a full package of technical assessments associated with the delivery of the previously proposed larger site allocation boundary associated with the delivery of 4,020 homes. This work was considered within the Council's Sustainability Appraisal at that time.
- 2.4 The Council published a new Local Plan Preferred Sites Document for consultation in July 2016. Within this version of the Local Plan the Clifton Gate site boundary was the same as proposed in the now submitted version of the Local Plan.
- 2.5 At that time, the developers proposed two site options to the Council associated with the development of 1,348 homes (on a larger site area than proposed by the Council) and 1,725 homes. Each of the previously submitted technical assessments were updated to reflect the developers two proposed options.
- 2.6 In response to the publication of the Pre-Publication Draft Local Plan (September 2017), the developers proposed a third alternative site option for 2,200 homes. This was on the basis of the site being able to deliver 2,200 within the period and in doing so providing permanence to the Green Belt in this area of the City.
- 2.7 The developers of the site have been promoting three alternative development options at the site in response to every publicised version of the Local Plan since September 2017. Including the Publication Draft Local Plan (February 2018) and the Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan (June 2019).
- 2.8 The updated Sustainability Appraisal (EX/CYC/62) again assesses the sustainability of the site and again supports its allocation for a Garden Village of 1,348 homes. The focus of the update in respect of ST14 is in relation to the findings of the updated HRA and the proposed main modification to Policy SS12 which seeks to respond to them. As discussed below, we do not object to the proposed main modification to Policy SS12 as this issue is something that the site can comprehensively respond to.
- 2.9 Accordingly, the Council has undertaken detailed Sustainability Appraisal work in respect of a number of different development site options for the Clifton Gate proposals ranging from 1,348 homes to 4,020 homes over a 10-year period. All of these options were considered to be sustainable.

- 2.10 As previously stated at the Phase 1 Examination Hearing Sessions, the proposed increase in the size of the site would also proportionately increase the sustainability of the development through delivering a critical mass to support the proposed services and facilities that are required to support it.
- 2.11 Furthermore, an expansion of the allocation boundary in the manner being proposed by TW Fields and Barratt Homes would bring the allocation, and the new homes to be delivered within it, closer to the services and facilities located within the Clifton Moor commercial and leisure area, thus making the allocation more sustainable from a purely locational/distance point of view.
- 2.12 There should therefore be no concerns associated with the sustainability of the Clifton Gate site and if there are these can be resolved through the expansion of the site in the manner proposed by the developer.
- 2.13 In conclusion, with specific regard to Site Ref. ST14, the Local Plan has been informed by an adequate process of Sustainability Appraisal.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 2.14 The Council's updated Habitat Regulations Assessment (REF/CYC/45 – HRA 2020) has comprehensively assessed the potential impact of the Local Plan and the proposed site allocations on Strensall Common.
- 2.15 With regards to Site Ref. ST14, the updated HRA identifies that the Clifton Gate site is situated approximately 4.6km from the most convenient access point to Strensall Common.
- 2.16 The HRA states that the development of the site would have only a 1% increase in visitor pressures to Strensall Common.
- 2.17 In response the HRA identifies that the policy text for the site should be amended to ensure that the impacts identified in the HRA as a result of recreational pressure on Strensall Common are mitigated. Accordingly, the Council have proposed a modification (Ref. PM61) to include the following additional criteria within Policy SS12 of the Local Plan: -

xiv. Provide a detailed site wide recreation and open space strategy and demonstrate its application in site masterplanning. Open space provision must satisfy policies GI2a and GI6.

- 2.18 TW Fields have previously stated that they have no objection to the amended policy wording for the site, as there are a number of specific measures that the site would deliver that will reduce the need and desire for future residents to visit Strensall Common to a negligible level include: -
- A minimum of 10.25ha of public open space, green corridors, and recreational facilities as part of the development proposals.
 - The retention and enhancement of existing woodland, hedgerows and trees located within and surrounding the site. Appropriate accessibility into these areas will be provided.
 - The provision of substantial levels of new landscape planting within and surrounding the site. Providing landscape, Appropriate accessibility into these areas will be provided.
 - New walking and cycling routes will be provided from the new settlement to Clifton Moor, also connecting the site to the wider York footpath and cycle network.
 - An existing public footpath connection between Clifton Moor and Skelton will be enhanced and made suitable for pedestrian/cycling connectivity, **instead of needing to cross the Outer Ring Road, which is what the existing PROW requires.**

- The walking and cycling routes in and around the site would be in excess of 5km in length and therefore remove any day to day need or desire to visit Strensall Common for general recreation purposes (including dog walking).
- 2.19 Furthermore, strategic issues such as the disposal of wastewater, would effectively be screened out through adhering to the requirements of Local Plan Policy GI2 (vii). In particular, the Drainage Strategy for the development proposals will ensure that the water quality of the site and surrounding area is not negatively affected through the provision of three phase Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and the removal of silt and chemical inputs. A Construction Environment Management Plan will also be produced to demonstrate that construction run-off will be attenuated to prevent silt or diffuse pollutants entering the wider catchment area.
- 2.20 The distance of the Clifton Gate site from Strensall Common; the provision of a substantial quantity of high quality on-site publicly accessible open space; and the provision of sustainable urban drainage systems will ensure that the Clifton Gate development has a negligible impact on Strensall Common, which is no greater than any other part of the City. The aforementioned measures would therefore meet the requirements of Policy GI6, Policy GI2a and Policy SS12 of the Local Plan.
- 2.21 In conclusion, with specific regard to Site Ref. ST14, the Local Plan has been informed by an adequate process of Habitat Regulations Assessment.