

From: Vic Ranger [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:34 AM
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: S62A/2023/0023 - Eastfield Stables, May Walk, Elsenham Road, Stansted, Essex,

Hello Mark

Apologies for this being two days late.

As requested I am responding to your request for observations on the December 2023 changes to the NPPF and the update on the HDT figures, also released in December.

I note that the LPA has provided you with the updated 5 year housing land supply statement. The statement was presented to their planning committee on 12 January 2024.

This statement concludes that the LPA can now only demonstrate a 4.5 year supply of housing land.

The draft emerging local plan has been published at regulation 18 stage, the consultation period has now ended, however the LPA have publicly declared that the regulation 19 plan will be substantially different and that statement by the CEO was made prior to the reg 18 issue and, obviously, before receipt of the public consultation responses.

The HDT update reflects the references I made in my Design and Access statement on this application where I illustrated that the April 2023 figures showed a concerning number of non-starts.

Mortgage rates are an issue for would-be buyers. Major house builders, the LPA are dependent on these companies to a large degree in the current circumstances, are reluctant to commit for various reasons, the primary ones being share prices and company/shareholders profits.

By neglecting small and medium sized sites within the regulation 18 proposed allocations, Eastfield Stables being a prime example, and refusing planning permissions on such sites, the LPA have delayed progress. The appeals system is overloaded and as a result of applicants having to take that course, further delay occurs.

On the basis that Eastfield Stables is in a sustainable location for residential development and can be built out immediately, the latest 5 year land supply situation of only 4.5 years with no up to date Local Plan, the tilted planning balance is engaged and approval should be granted.

The LPA have concluded their statement update to you by saying *"However, the same presumption was applied in the officer's committee report anyway given that the Council's Development Plan cannot be viewed as being fully up to date (see paragraph 13.3.1 and Section K of the officer's committee report). Despite the 5YHLS shortfall identified above, given the limited number of dwellings proposed, the weight to be afforded to the development's contribution to the district's housing supply would still be limited and the adverse impacts of the proposal would still significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposal would not be sustainable development for which paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF indicates a presumption in favour."*

The Design and Access statement illustrates several examples where policy S7 has been found to be not fully compliant with the vision of the NPPF which requires LPAs to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The proposed allocations within the draft emerging local plan are within the countryside, some in very exposed locations. That is not the case here, yet the LPA is happy to support those exposed location applications, some of which are not sustainable and residents will rely wholly on transport by private car. If the quantum of dwellings being provided is a factor in overcoming " the adverse impacts" then Eastfield Stable could provide many more. It is the applicant's desire to provide a low density development. The LPA are overlooking the fact that the applicant is providing a financial contribution to the LPA for the provision of more dwellings elsewhere in the district. The LPA are of the opinion that the level of adverse impacts that would arise from this development outweighs the benefits. That view is strongly rebutted. The applicant submitted a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment and an Ecological Appraisal. These reports include the enhancements to the site that will be embedded in the completed development. In their concluding paragraph of their response to you, the LPA omits to show the full text of paragraph 11 (d). 11 (d) ii reads "any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole". The underlining is added for emphasis.

The policies within the NPPF seek to ensure that sufficient housing land is brought forward whilst protection is given to areas or assets of particular importance. None such areas or assets are present in this application.

The applicant would submit that any perceived adverse impacts are minor and that the benefits obtained by granting planning permission; the provision of housing, enhancements to the ecology, the environment, the landscape and the local economy and social interaction, far outweigh any harm.

Kind regards

Vic

Ranger Management & Design Services
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