

Birmingham Development Plan 2031

Examination hearing statement

On behalf of:

1. The Gilmour Family
2. Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust &
3. Bishop Vesey's Grammar School

Matter A: Housing need and the housing trajectory (BDP policies PG1, TP28 & TP30)

1. Main issue: Does the Plan appropriately identify housing needs and does it seek to meet them in accordance with national policy?

Questions:

- 1) Is the Plan based on an objective assessment of the full needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area over the Plan period?**

It is apparent from the Birmingham City Council (BCC) response to the Inspector's initial questions (EXAM 2C) that the Council accepts that at present it does not know the level of the full objectively assessed needs (OAN) for the housing market area over the plan period. Thus the plan is not based on OAN for market and affordable housing in the housing market area over the plan period.

BCC acknowledge that the City's OAN for new housing, even when based on the SMHA (H2) which is not compliant with the Framework, substantially exceeds the capacity of sites within the urban area and has, appropriately, concluded that in order to maximise housing delivery within the City boundary it is necessary to release land with the green belt as a Sustainable Urban Extension. It should be noted that this is not a case in which we are asking for the City to be told to release Green Belt when it objects in principle to doing so. The only basis for the limit on the release of further Green Belt is the City's view of the maximum Plan period delivery from it.

- 2) If not, what alternative objective assessment of housing needs should the Plan be based upon?**

As and when Stage 3 of the GBSLEP Joint Housing Study emerges and a figure for OAN is proposed (which may be higher than that included in the Submission Plan), it is apparently the case that the BCC will not change its view that the capacity within the City boundary remains the same and any higher figure may well impact on the level of

provision that will need to be made to help meet Birmingham's needs in neighbouring areas.

We consider that the plan should be based on OAN determined in accordance with the Framework.

However, our representations are not dependent upon any increase in OAN. Our representations as submitted in February 2014 challenge BCC's approach in the plan with particular regard to Green Belt and housing delivery in the North Eastern area of the City. In short the Plan fails to accommodate as much of its OAN within the City as would be consistent with its strategy for the Plan and the Framework.

BCC's position is that the level of new housing proposed in the BDP is the **maximum** that could reasonably be delivered in Birmingham over the plan period. We disagree with this view for the reasons that are set out in detail in our representations. We note that BCC has provided no rebuttal of our position other than in relation to the supplementary paper prepared by Peter Brett (PG4), on which we will respond later.

3) Does the Plan meet the full needs for market and affordable housing, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework?

The provision for market and affordable housing in the BDP is based on an assessment of capacity within the City boundary which in respect of Green Belt we consider to be fundamentally flawed for the reasons set out in the submitted representations supported specifically by the LDA and CgMS reports attached as Appendices B and C.

Accordingly, it is considered that:

1. The BDP does not give proper consideration to the strategic role and function of the West Midlands green belt having regard to paragraphs 83 and 84 of the Framework.
2. The BDP does not provide evidence of compliance with the Duty to Co-operate in terms of paragraphs 178 - 181 of the Framework.

3. The BDP does not provide evidence of the extent to which it will achieve sustainable development in terms of paragraph 8 of the Framework.
4. The BDP not identify the full housing needs across the housing market area in compliance with paragraph 159 of the Framework

4) What proportion of the assessed housing needs should be met outside the Plan area, and by what mechanism should that proportion be distributed to other local planning authorities' areas?

Paragraph 3.27 of the BDP states:

The strategy of the BDP is to accommodate as much of the City's housing requirement as possible within the boundary. However, the land that is available to the City to accommodate future development is limited. Alongside the BDP a wider growth strategy for the LEP area and other adjoining authorities will set out how and where the remaining housing could be delivered. This will take account of historic trends where adjoining authorities have accommodated a proportion of the City's growth.

In our submission the first part of this question should test the Council's assertion regarding the capacity of the City to accommodate new housing. It is that part of the BDP which will require modification. Whatever the level of OAN the lowest proportion possible should be met outside the plan area. Such an approach would be environmentally desirable and the most sustainable approach in accordance with the Framework for the reasons set out in our representations.

The BDP contains no specific mechanism to determine what proportion of Birmingham's unmet housing should be distributed to other local planning authorities' areas. There are proposals for the GBSLEP and Black Country areas but as is clear from the table included in paragraph 1.8 of our Part C Representation there are other

areas e.g. Coventry & Warwickshire LEP that have been a destination for migration flows from Birmingham. At present any solution to this regional problem is unresolved.

- 5) Is there justification for the staged housing trajectory set out in policy TP28?**

- 6) If not, what alternative trajectory should be pursued?**

- 7) Does policy TP30 set out a sound approach to the provision of affordable housing?**

- 8) Is policy TP30 justified in seeking affordable housing provision in specialist housing and extracare housing schemes?**