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**Sellwood
Planning**

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Issue 10 : 398370

Dacorum Core Strategy Public Examination

Issue 10 “Place Strategies : Hemel Hempstead”

Submitted by
Sellwood Planning
on behalf of
Gleeson Developments Ltd

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Regulated by RICS

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1.0 **Introduction**

1.1 This statement has been prepared by Sellwood Planning on behalf of Gleeson Developments Ltd (398370). Gleeson has an Option over part of Local Allocation LA1 (Marchmont Farm, Hemel Hempstead) and supports the Council in its proposals for the residential development of this land.

2.0 **(Q(10.1)) “Is the policy for growth and change in this area appropriate and justified including in relation to national guidance and local needs, and in terms of economic, social and environmental impact? Can local infrastructure satisfactorily accommodate the proposed growth? Have all reasonable alternative sites been assessed? Has the transport infrastructure required to support the proposed growth been properly assessed?”**

2.1 The Core Strategy proposals for focussing growth and change in Hemel Hempstead are appropriate and in accordance with national guidance and local needs since the town is the most sustainable settlement in the Borough with the greatest potential to minimise car use. Whilst some Green Belt releases are proposed at Hemel Hempstead, it is considered that the growth needs of the town constitute “exceptional circumstances”. Without these local allocations, the Town would fail to meet both the housing needs of its population and the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development (NPPF paragraph 7).

2.2 With regard to the ability of local infrastructure to accommodate growth, Gleeson can only make comments in respect of the proposed Marchmont Farm allocation. The Marchmont Farm allocation has been tested against the adequacy of the local social and physical infrastructure (including transport) and no ‘in principle’ constraints have been found. Indeed, the development of Marchmont Farm is expected to assist the regeneration of the adjoining Grovehill area by providing additional population to support local facilities and services.

2.3 All reasonable alternative sites have been assessed at several stages in the preparation of the plan. These have included the Issues and Options consultation ‘Growth at Hemel Hempstead’ in 2006, the ‘Assessment of Alternative Growth Scenarios for Hemel Hempstead’ (2009) and the ‘Assessment of Local Allocations and Strategic Sites’ (2011).

3.0 (Q(10.2)) “What are the implications for Hemel Hempstead with regard to development on land to the east with St Albans City and District? Is the proposed boundary of the East Hemel Hempstead AAP appropriate and justified? Have all the opportunities for development to the east of Hemel Hempstead been robustly explored?”

3.1 No comment.

4.0 (Q(10.3)) “Are the Local Allocation (particularly LA1 and LA2) justified and are the principles for their development sound?”

4.1 The proposed Marchmont Farm Local Allocation (LA1) is both appropriate and justified. It has been through a rigorous process of assessment and has consistently featured as a preferred site in all growth scenarios which required Green Belt releases. Indeed, the Council’s ‘Assessment of Local Allocations and Strategic Sites’ notes that Marchmont Farm ‘is the most sustainable of the greenfield sites considered’ and recommended that it is the first of the Green Belt sites to be released. The Joint Statement between the landowners and the Council provides the detail on why this is an appropriate and deliverable site.

5.0 (Q(10.4 to 10.8))

5.1 No comment.