

DACORUM CORE STRATEGY

HEARING STATEMENT - EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC OF THE CORE STRATEGY

SECTION FOUR – DESIGN AND USING RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY

MADE ON BEHALF OF AVIVA INVESTORS

SEPTEMBER 2012



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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This Hearing Statement is prepared on behalf of our client, Aviva Investors, in respect of The Dacorum Core Strategy.
- 1.2** Aviva Investors own the Peoplebuilding site located on Marylands Avenue within Hemel Hempstead. It has been a long term stakeholder within Hemel Hempstead and has actively sought to deliver and secure investment within the town since it originally acquired the site.
- 1.3** The Hearing Statement is based on the representations made by the Company as part of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy consultation and is intended to assist the Inspector's consideration of the compliance and soundness of the Core Strategy.
- 1.4** We confirm that we will be attending the Hearing on the following days to provide oral representations in respect of the issues referred to within this Statement:
 - Wednesday 10 October (Issues 4 and 5); and
- 1.5** The representations made as part of this Statement are intended to assist the Company deliver significant economic growth and job creation within the Borough in the short, medium and long term.

ISSUES CONSIDERED IN THIS HEARING STATEMENT

2.1 The Issues that are dealt with as part of this Statement relate to the following:

4.4 Securing Quality Design

2.2 The Issue listed above is dealt with below in Section 3.0 although commentary has been limited to the issues raised as part of the original representation submitted as part of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy Consultation as per the Guidance Notes.

ASSESSMENT OF THE ISSUES

- 3.1 The individual issues which are considered as part of this Statement are set out below.

Issue 4: Design and Using Resources Efficiently

Question 4.4: *Are the links between ‘Securing Quality Design’ (Chapter 10) and ‘Using Resources Efficiently’ (Chapter 18) sufficiently clear? Is Policy CS29 consistent with the relevant national guidance, including in relation to climate change? Is the policy overly prescriptive? The last paragraph refers to ‘tree canopy requirements’ but criterion (h) refers to the provision of new trees (not specifically their canopy). Should this be clarified?*

- 3.2 Whilst we are supportive of the overall requirement to secure good quality design in new proposals, design should be subject to viability appraisals. The requirement of securing high quality design should not render a development unviable and design standards should be reflective of the commercial value of the proposed development. For example, large format buildings which require large floor plates could be rendered unviable if the proposal is required to be constructed to the same design standards as a smaller standalone building.
- 3.3 The NPPF sets out that its key objective is to secure ‘sustainable economic growth’. It follows that developments should not be refused on design grounds if the applicant has shown willingness to incorporate good design features. If a proposal incorporates elements of good design, proportionate to the type of proposal, then it should be granted.
- 3.4 In summary, the requirement for good design should not be prohibitive to applications, although it should still be given weight when determining applications, relative to the type and size of proposal.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1** These Representations have been made on behalf of Aviva Investors in respect of The Dacorum Core Strategy.
- 4.2** They accord with the initial representations that were made on behalf of the Company in respect of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy consultation and are anticipated to assist the Inspector's consideration of the compliance and soundness of the document.
- 4.3** In accordance with the Guidance Notes, we provide a brief summary of these representations in respect of the relevant policies of the Core Strategy in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of Representations

Policy	Comment	Legally Compliant	Sound	Proposed Amendment
CS28/29	Object	Yes	No – Ground (3) Effective	Policies CS28 and CS29 should be made aspirational targets but provision should be included within the Policy for an assessment of viability.

- 4.4** We trust that these representations will be afforded the appropriate level of weight by the Inspector and confirm our attendance on the relevant days of the Hearing.