

Miller Homes response to the Darlington Local Plan Examination
Inspector's Matter, Issues and Questions

Hedley Planning Services are instructed by Miller Homes in support of Land at Station Road, Middleton St George. The site was considered in part (northern section) in the Councils *Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment* (2018) (Site 90 West of St Georges Gate, MSG) as suitable, available and achievable with an indicative yield of 109no. dwellings and in the Councils view could come forward within the 6-10 year period.

The southern section was not considered by the HELAA process.

Matter 2

Amount of Development needed in the Borough

Economic growth and employment land requirements

Q2.1. Is the aim to facilitate economic growth of 7,000 net additional jobs in the Borough between 2016 and 2036 justified and positively prepared?

Q2.2. Are the proposals in policies E1 and E2 to provide for a total of 158 hectares (net) of additional land for employment uses justified and positively prepared? In particular, would this overall quantity of land allow for the creation of 7,000 net additional jobs between 2016 and 2036 and provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate needs not anticipated and enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances?

No comments

Household growth and housing requirements

Q2.3. Are (a) the minimum requirement of 422 net additional dwellings per year and (b) the target of 492 net additional dwellings per year between 2016 and 2036 justified, positively prepared and consistent with national policy?

Q2.4. Is expressing the housing requirement as a range clear and unambiguous, and does the plan clearly establish a housing requirement figure for the Borough for the Plan period as required by national policy?

Miller Homes have been and are supportive of Darlington's decision to utilise a figure over and above the minimum 'Standard Method' housing requirement. The proposed level of new housing will help support sustainable development, boost housing supply and support the economic prosperity of the area.

However, as the policy refers to two figures it is unclear and ambiguous and therefore currently contrary to paragraph 16, criteria d, of the NPPF2019. Miller Homes do not consider that a range is appropriate and are concerned that the higher figure could be seen as maximum, even with text to state it is not, which would inevitably limit the development of new homes.

Miller Homes would therefore suggest that to make the policy sound the range is removed and that Policy H1 is modified to set out a more simple and unambiguous housing requirement, consistent with the proposed target of 492net additional dwellings per annum (9,840 over the plan period).

Q2.5. Is the Plan based on adequate and proportionate evidence about the quantitative and qualitative need for office, retail and leisure development in the Borough?

No comments