
Inspector's Matters Issues and Questions

Examination of the Darlington Local Plan

Part 1 Hearings (Matter 9)



Contents

Introduction	1
Matter 9 – Transport and Other Infrastructure	3



Introduction

We have been instructed on behalf of our clients, Hellens Land Limited and Homes England, to submit a response to the Examination of the Darlington Local Plan: Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions. Hellens Group have over 40 years' experience of delivering a range of housing, leisure and infrastructure developments across the North of England. Homes England is a non-departmental public body which works to accelerate housing delivery, working with developers across the country to improve neighbourhoods and grow communities.

Our client's joint interest is in respect of the Burtree Village which is located north west of Darlington and is located within the jurisdiction of Darlington Borough Council. These representations have been submitted to support the proposed strategic allocation for 2,000 residential dwellings, 200,000 sqm of employment space, community facilities, link road and associated infrastructure at Greater Faverdale (Burtree Garden Village).

This Statement should be read in conjunction with all previous representations made on behalf of our clients in relation to Burtree Garden Village. It is prepared by Savills with answers to transport matters prepared by SAJ Transport Consultants.

Our clients are committed to ensuring the strategic allocation (and the Publication Draft Local Plan) is sound and robust. Our comments will therefore focus on the following Matters:

- Matter 1: - Legal and Procedural Requirements and other General Matters
- Matter 2: Amount of development needed in the Borough
- Matter 3: Vision, aims, objectives and spatial strategy
- Matter 4: Housing development
- Matter 5: Meeting particular housing needs
- Matter 7: Economic Development
- Matter 8 – Town Centres and Retail Development
- Matter 9- – Transport and other infrastructure
- Matter 10 - Other strategic and development management policies
- Matter 11 - Other Issues

Inspector's Matters Issues and Questions

Hellens Land Limited and Homes England



This statement addresses a number of questions raised by the Inspector under Matter 9: Transport and Other Infrastructure.

Matter 9 – Transport and Other Infrastructure

Delivering a sustainable transport network (policy IN1)

Q9.2. Is the creation of an orbital road and public transport route as indicated on the key diagram justified? If so, to be effective, does policy IN1 part C(vii) need to be modified to clarify that is one of the objectives that the seven schemes listed are expected to achieve?

Please see our response to Matter 4. It is our understanding that the orbital route forms a potential mitigation strategy for longer term cumulative growth in northern Darlington and particularly in relation to development post 2036.

Q9.3. To ensure that policy IN1 part A(ii) is effective and justified, should all of the “strategic priority corridors” be defined on the policies map?

Hellens Land Limited and Homes England are supportive of strategies to ensure that Greater Faverdale can be accessed via a range of means of transport as required by IN1. Indeed, the on-going masterplanning will enhance accessibility. Whether the strategic priority corridors are located on the proposals map or cross reference to accompanying strategies are required, it is evident that these corridors as shown in the associated strategies are indicative and broad covering wide areas with the exact location of strategic green buffers difficult to establish. Whilst we consider it unlikely to impact upon Greater Faverdale, we would request that sufficient flexibility is added to the plan to ensure that positive plan objectives do not hinder the detailed development of masterplans with reference to “safeguarding these routes for development”. The wider plan will ensure that new strategic development provides adequate cycle and pedestrian connections and green corridors with the detail to be secured via masterplanning and subsequent planning applications.

Q9.4. Are any other modifications required to policy IN1 to ensure that it is sound?

With specific reference to criterion vii of Policy IN1 (or criterion vi post modification) which references the Faverdale Link Road, this is consistent with what is required to deliver Policy H11 (Greater Faverdale). Please see our response to Matter 4 which provides further information regarding the modelling undertaken to inform the requisite highways mitigation to deliver development at Greater Faverdale until 2036. The link road as referenced in IN1 forms a key part of this and as such criterion iv) of the policy does not need modification in this regard.

With regard to the supporting text, paragraph 10.5.11 which also references the link road as key infrastructure is reflective of the above and consistent with our representations to Matter 4. HLL and HE are committed to delivering the Faverdale Link Road from Rotary Way to Burtree Lane (interventions NW5 and NW8) and the approach as presented in the PDLP is sound. As noted in Matter 4, Homes England are investigating alternative means of delivering this link road infrastructure which may accelerate the delivery of the link road and housing.

As stated in paragraph 10.5.23:

“The detailed traffic modelling indicates that the development within the Local Plan does not have a severe impact on the local and strategic highway network subject to the schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan being implemented”.

As stated in Matter 4, with regard to Greater Faverdale, we are in agreement with DBC that sufficient modelling work has been undertaken to present a sound strategy for infrastructure delivery to 2036. It is understood that further technical work will be required to assess solutions for longer term growth beyond 2036, inclusive of a potential orbital link road connecting the existing radial routes serving the town.

Improving access and accessibility (policies IN2 and IN3)

Q9.5. Subject to the Council's proposed modifications, is policy IN2 sound?

Hellens Land and Homes England are preparing a masterplan which seeks to ensure adequate public transport provision within a suitable walking distance. Indeed, discussions are on-going with bus services regarding extended provision into Greater Faverdale (please see Matter 4). However, some flexibility on policy requirements and distances should be reflected in policy, with some discretion left to the decision maker as to whether adequate bus provision is provided or whether it is accessible in other ways. The 400m distance should be indicative mindful that larger strategic sites have a number of design matters to overcome. Furthermore, in instances where a 400m walking distance cannot be met, this would be due to physical constraints and as such a financial contribution in lieu would not address this deficiency. As such, any reference to developer contributions in criterion d) should reflect the wording of criterion f) which states "where considered appropriate".