

Examination of Newcastle upon Tyne Development and Allocations Plan 2015 – 2030

Participant: Newcastle Great Park Consortium

Matter 2: Economic Prosperity

1.0 Introduction

1.1 On behalf of our client, the Newcastle Great Park Consortium, comprising Persimmon Homes and Taylor Wimpey North East, we are pleased to submit this Matter 2 Hearing Statement to the Inspector in relation to the Examination of the Newcastle upon Tyne Development and Allocations Plan 2015 – 2030.

Question 2.11: Would Policy DM3 be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy and with the CSUCP?

1.2 The Consortium considers that Policy DM3 has not been positively prepared and is not justified, effective and consistent with national policy and also conflicts with the CSUCP because it is overly restrictive and only allows non-retail use at ground flood level (outside Use Class A1 - shops) within district and local centres where they would:

- 1 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.
- 2 Not dominate or fragment the centre either individually or cumulatively.
- 3 Maintain an active ground floor frontage.

1.3 However, the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.”
(para. 85)

1.4 The restrictive nature of Policy DM3 conflicts with the NPPF which advises that centres should be allowed to grow and diversity in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters (para. 85 a). Part b) of paragraph 85 refers to making *“clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre”*. The NPPF also recognises that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourages residential development on appropriate sites (para. 85 f).

1.5 The restrictive nature of this policy also conflicts with Policy CS7 (Retail and Centres) of the ‘Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle, 2010 – 2030’ (CSUCP). Part 1(iii) of this policy refers to district centres providing key services, including shopping, local services, leisure, public and community facilities. The centre at Newcastle Great Park is allocated as a District Centre.

1.6 The NGP Consortium welcomes the allocation of the District Centre at NGP. The District Centre boundary covers a relatively large area. This land benefits from outline planning permission for the whole area, parts of the centre have been delivered, whilst other parts have extant planning permission. The centre will include the full range of retail uses plus various community uses

including medical, nursery and residential care uses, as well as residential uses. These uses will ensure a thriving, vibrant and sustainable centre.

- 1.7 The range of uses approved at NGP accords with Part 1 of Policy DM3 as they will make an important contribution of the vitality and viability of centres.
- 1.8 With regard to Part 2, non Class A1 uses may dominate parts of a centre, whilst in terms of Part 3, not all non Class A1 uses will deliver active ground floor frontages. However, providing a range of uses will help deliver a thriving, vibrant and sustainable centre, as required by the NPPF. It is therefore important that sufficient flexibility is provided within the policy to deliver a full range of town centre uses, not just the retail uses, including other non-retail, commercial, community and residential uses to ensure a sustainable centre.
- 1.9 Policy DM3 as currently worded is overly restrictive, could unnecessarily prevent any non-retail uses, has not been positively prepared and conflicts with the NPPF (paragraphs 35 and 85) and Policy CS7 of the adopted CSUCP. The implications are this policy could have a detrimental impact on the delivery of a mixed-use centre. It is therefore respectfully requested that Parts 2 and 3 should be deleted.

- 1.10 The NGP Consortium suggests the following changes to Policy DM3 to ensure a sound Plan which is positively prepared and provides the most appropriate strategy for the City's centres:

“District and Local Centres are designated on the Policies Map. The development of non-retail uses at ground floor (outside Use Class A1 - shops) within these centres will only be acceptable where they would:-

1. Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.

2. Not dominate or fragment the centre either individually or cumulatively.

3. Maintain an active ground floor frontage.”

Question 2.13: Is Policy DM3 sufficiently clear to be effective? How do you measure dominance or fragmentation of the centre either individually or cumulatively?

- 1.11 Policy DM3 is not sufficiently clear. As currently worded this policy could prevent appropriate non Class A1 retail uses from occupying a centre. Such uses could enhance the vitality of a centre rather than have a fragmenting impact.

Question 2.14: Is Policy DM3 sufficiently flexible to allow centres to grow and diversify in a way that responds to rapid changes in retail and leisure industries?

- 1.12 The Consortium does not consider that Policy DM3 is flexible enough to allow centres to grow and diversity in a way that responds to rapid changes for the reasons provided in response to Question 2.11.