



TORBAY LOCAL PLAN – A LANDSCAPE FOR SUCCESS

LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN MATERIAL

HEARING STATEMENT INFORMATIVE – STRATEGY AND ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement is prepared on behalf of our client, Bloor Homes (South West) Limited, and is made with reference to the land that they have an interest in at Collaton St Mary, which is identified within the Future Growth Area.
- 1.2 Boyer Planning is aware from the Pre-Hearing Notes that the Inspector does not expect substantial additional material to be submitted at this stage. Accordingly, this Hearing Statement aims to assist the Inspector by considering the background evidence prepared by Torbay Council since April 2014, and the implications that this has for the delivery of our client's site at Collaton St Mary.
- 1.3 It also provides an informative update in respect of ongoing work undertaken in respect of the progression of the site since the submission of the representations to the Proposed Submission Local Plan in April 2014.
- 1.4 This work has included consultation with the Local Planning Authority and their masterplanning consultants together with initial analysis and assessment of the development capacity of the site.
- 1.5 It should be noted that this Hearing Statement should be read in conjunction with the representations submitted by Barton Willmore, who are also acting on behalf of Bloor Homes South West Limited. Their representations relate to the housing land supply issues and, in particular, an assessment of housing need, whereas this Statement focuses on more site specific matters.

2. Torbay Local Plan Representations

- 2.1 Boyer Planning submitted representations to the Proposed Submission Local Plan in April 2014. Accordingly, and as directed by the Inspector, it is not the intention to repeat those representations within this Hearing Statement. However, a brief summary is now provided in order to provide the context of the ongoing work.
- 2.2 In essence, the representations stated that greater weight should be afforded to sites within the Strategic Delivery Areas and that they should not be prevented from coming forward in the early stages of the Plan where they have been subject to the masterplanning process.

- 2.3 Therefore, in reference to Collaton St Mary, there should be no delay or impediment to its development if it has been through the masterplanning process and it has been shown that they have addressed wider infrastructure requirements (either through provision or contribution) and provide can social, regeneration and community benefits.
- 2.4 In addition, it was seen that this issue was critical to the success of the Local Plan particularly given the need to deliver the Council's housing strategy and improve the surety of housing land supply. This is of importance when considering the concerns raised by interested parties in respect of the identified housing development needs in Torbay.
- 2.5 Our client also raised concerns regarding the need for the masterplan to go through the Neighbourhood Planning process, it was felt that this would just replicate the masterplanning process and would add unnecessary delays. It was suggested that by removing this requirement, it will enable these sites to be delivered effectively and within an achievable timeframe.

3. Local Plan Submission Documents Update

3.1 Since making the representations to the Proposed Submission Local Plan in April 2014, Torbay Council has prepared - as part of the Examination Submission Documents - a Technical Paper entitled - Growth Strategy and Capacity for Change (July 2014).

3.2 This paper is the subject of the Hearing Statement made on behalf of our client by Barton Willmore, which covers wider issues. Accordingly, we focus only on those paragraphs of particular relevance to the site at Collaton St Mary.

3.3 In this regard, the paragraphs on Page 31 should be noted. They state:

'Policy SS1 and SS2 "Future Growth Areas" proposes four Future Growth Areas (all within "red" Strategic Delivery Areas) at Edginswell, Torquay; Collaton St Mary and Brixham Road, Paignton; and Wall Park Brixham. Masterplans have been prepared to inform development at Edginswell and Collaton St Mary as well as Paignton and Brixham town centres. These are expected to provide mixed use developments providing a range of housing, recreation, employment and biodiversity mitigation measures'.

3.4 They also states that:

'It is expected that Future Growth Areas will form part of the medium-term (i.e. post 5 year) supply of development land. A number of sites have strong developer interest (for example, Collaton St Mary and Wall Park)'... on this basis earlier delivery will be supported where infrastructure and environmental matters can be overcome'.

- 3.5 As the Technical Paper acknowledges, a masterplan has been prepared to inform the Future Growth Area at Collaton St Mary and the following section sets out our client's engagement with that process and work that has been undertaken to moving forward the site towards its potential development.
- 3.6 Given this, we would draw reference to the Technical Paper's commentary that early delivery will be supported where infrastructure and environmental matters can be overcome.
- 3.7 It is suggested that this is the case with our client's site at Collaton St Mary, that is, it forms part of a masterplanning process which is due to be finalised shortly whilst initial analysis and assessment of the site (through the work being undertaken by our client) has demonstrated that infrastructure and environmental matters can be addressed.
- 3.8 In these terms, it is considered that the delivery of these sites should not be delayed, for example, by going through the Neighbourhood Planning process or phased to a later period of the Local Plan – as currently proposed -and that that early delivery should be supported given the wider housing land supply issues facing Torbay.

4. Site Progress

- 4.1 In light of the above, it is considered that it might be of assistance to the Inspector if we provide information on the work undertaken by Bloor Homes in relation to land at Collaton St Mary, Paignton since the representations to the Proposed Submission Local Plan.
- 4.2 A meeting was held with Officers from Torbay Council, the Council's consultants, Stride Treglown and representatives from Taylor Wimpey in May 2014. The meeting was held to facilitate the Council's engagement with Bloor Homes and Taylor Wimpey (who have an interest in land to the north of Totnes Road) in relation to the wider Collaton St Mary masterplan and to secure inputs into the study in terms of site capacity, viability considerations and planning obligations.
- 4.3 During the course of the meeting, the Council and their consultants noted that they had conducted a significant amount of work in analysing the area relative to transport requirements, topography and resident's needs. It was also noted that there had been an extensive consultation on the Collaton St Mary Masterplan, and that subject to wider infrastructure and environmental matters being overcome, the Council considered that applications could come forward on the identified sites during the course of 2015.
- 4.4 In addition, a further meeting was held independently with Stride Treglown during June 2014 to understand the masterplan and its implications for the potential development of the site under the control of our client. Discussion were held on a without prejudice basis and considered the initial version of the masterplan, which was still at draft stage.

- 4.5 It is understood that the masterplan has now progressed and that the Council are due to undertake a final review towards the end of October. The masterplan will then be placed out for public consultation during the course of November 2014.
- 4.6 In this regard, we would highlight that there is a need for our client's site to be considered in a realistic, feasible and viable manner. There is a requirement for the masterplan to ensure that development should be optimised in order for wider infrastructure and environmental benefits to be realised, and more pertinently, to help address the wider housing land supply issues present within Torbay.
- 4.7 It is our client's perspective that by optimising the development potential of their site through a realistic assessment of capacity in which green infrastructure, access and wider landscape considerations are all influential factors then wider benefits can be secured for the local community, for instance, through the creation of useable and easily accessible green space and parkland that will link with the existing proposals at Great Parks.
- 4.8 In addition, the site's development needs to be viable in order that it realises funding for necessary infrastructure and help meet the Council's own housing needs (both market and affordable). This can only be achieved by the Council taking a realistic and flexible view of the site's capacity and coverage.
- 4.9 Such an approach will be critical to the success of the masterplanning exercise undertaken for Collaton St Mary.

5. Ongoing Technical Work

- 5.1 To support the above, and to demonstrate that the site can be delivered early and should not be phased towards the end of the Plan Period, we now set out the technical work currently being undertaken:
- Topographical Survey;
 - Initial Landscape Assessment;
 - Illustrative Layout Design;
 - Initial Highways Assessment;
 - Traffic Count Surveys; and
 - Phase 1 Habitat Surveys.
- 5.2 The above will be supported by further evidence that will be prepared in support of the Outline Planning Application. It is proposed that the application will be prepared in conjunction with the Torbay Council, with pre-application discussions being held shortly.
- 5.3 Taking all of the above into account, our client, Bloor Homes, anticipates that they will be in a position to submit an outline planning application during the first part of 2015.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 As per the representations submitted to the Proposed Submission Local Plan on behalf of our client, Bloor Homes, it is considered that the early delivery of their site at Collaton St Mary will enable the Local Plan's success relative to:
- Helping to actively address housing land supply issues;
 - Providing critical infrastructure requirements in Collaton St Mary; and
 - Enable wider community benefits to be realised in terms of housing and green infrastructure.
- 6.2 It is our client's view that given that the site has been through the masterplan process, and subject to infrastructure and environmental matters being adequately addressed, there is no reason why the site – as part of the Future Growth Area - cannot come forward during the early stage of the Local Plan period. This seems an eminently sensible approach given that much of the work, together with the wider public consultation exercise, has already been undertaken. To delay to the latter phases, or to require the site to go through the Neighbourhood Planning process, would appear to artificially postpone the development of this site.
- 6.3 Additionally, we would request that the Council should adopt a flexible and realistic view of the development potential of sites within the Collaton St Mary Future Growth Area. There is a need to optimise their potential in order to secure wider community benefits that would not be safeguarded if such an approach is not taken
- 6.4 In conclusion, we would ask that Inspector notes that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to bring forward the masterplan for Collaton St Mary and that, in parallel with this work, our client is in the process of preparing an outline planning submission. Accordingly, the Council should facilitate the early release of this site.