



PERSIMMON HOMES EAST MIDLANDS

Persimmon Hse. 19 Commerce Rd

Peterborough Bus Pk, Lynch Wood

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire

PE2 6LR

Tel: 01733 397200

Main Fax: 01733 397255

www.persimmonhomes.com

17th May 2018

Ms Emma Baker
Clerk to Oundle Town Council
Fletton House
Fletton Way
Glaphorn Road
Oundle
PE8 4JA

Sent by e-mail to: admin@oundle.gov.uk

Dear Sirs,

**OUNDLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2011 – 2031 – REGULATION 14,
CONSULTATION DRAFT (MARCH 2018)**

Thank you for providing Persimmon Homes with the opportunity to comment and be involved in the formation of the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan.

As you are aware, Persimmon Homes are a national house builder who have an interest in land in Oundle. Persimmon has historically built out a number of housing sites in Oundle and wish to continue this success in delivering housing for the area. We write in response to the formal consultation on the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Consultation Draft (March 2018). We trust these comments have been duly made within requested timescales and that they will be taken into account.

Persimmon Homes fully support Oundle Town Council in the preparation of their Neighbourhood Plan and are fully committed to engaging proactively in the Neighbourhood Plan process.

These representations are accompanied by the following enclosures/evidence base:

- Transport Assessment, Markides Associates, December 2017;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Anglian Water Pre-Planning Assessment Report, December 2017;
- Noise Impact Assessment, Spectrum Acoustics, November 2017
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment/Trial Trenching Results;
- Ecological Appraisal, FPCR, January 2018;
- Summary of Findings - Badger Monitoring, FPCR, December 2017;
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, JBA, August 2012

Persimmon Homes support the overall vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and would like to specifically comment on Policy 0.19 Land East of St. Christopher's Drive.

Site Specific Housing Policies – Policy 0.19 Land East of St. Christopher's Drive

Persimmon Homes are in support of this policy and believe that the St. Christopher's Drive site is the most sustainable and suitable site for development within Oundle for the reasons summarised below.

Background:

The site was previously subject to an Outline Planning application (13/01245/OUT) submitted to East Northamptonshire District Council (ENDC) in July 2013. The application was refused on 17 October 2013 on the grounds that it would result in new housing development on unallocated Greenfield land outside of the settlement boundary and the Council were able to demonstrate a deliverable five year housing land supply.

The refusal was subject to an Appeal Inquiry (APP/G2815/A/132209913) held in June 2014. It was recognised by both ENDC and the Inspectorate that the site had no technical issues and the principle debate centred on Housing Supply. The appeal was subsequently dismissed on the basis the Inspector supported ENDC's case that there was no need to identify further housing land within Oundle.

As set out at paragraph 5.54 of the Neighbourhood Plan, it has now been identified that there is a need for further housing land within and around Oundle.

Since 2014, Persimmon Homes have promoted this site as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process in conjunction with the Town Council. On going discussions have been held with regards to site capacity, delivery and phasing of the site. This has resulted in the current policy for up to 45 dwellings with a reserve housing land site for approximately 50 dwellings.

As set out at paragraph 3.2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, previous consultations have identified that the local community wish to see new sites come forward that are dispersed across the town within a 1 mile radius of the centre of Oundle to maintain a compact and walkable community. The local community want to avoid large-scale edge of settlement development.

In previous consultations, the site has been publically categorised by the District Council, the Town Council and local residents as the most sustainable and logical site in Oundle. Specifically, the initial Oundle Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire in February 2015 found this site as the most popular, first choice site in Oundle. As quoted in the Oundle Town Council Magazine March 2015 Q/A Feedback Report:-

'From the list of possible future development sites the survey revealed the most popular first choice set was East of St Christophers Drive (30%), followed by Cotterstock Road to St Peters Road (16%), North of Benefield Road (15%) and South of Benefield Road (10%)....'

Furthermore, the suitability of the site for residential development is further supported by Oundle Neighbourhood Plans's Sustainability Testing of sites (NPWP Housing Sustainability Matrix V4 dated 08.02.2017) which gives the site top scores.

This site is approximately 0.5 miles from the centre of Oundle and forms a natural extension to the existing St. Christopher's Drive development. Taking around 15 minutes to walk to the centre of Oundle, the site is also in close proximity to Prince William School and Nene Valley Business Park allowing for enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling to school and local employment opportunities. Furthermore, as part of the policy proposal, the site will incorporate part of the footpath rerouting of footpath UF6 which forms part of the Oundle Circular Route.

Given the site meets the criteria set out at paragraph 3.2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, we consider that this site is within a sustainable location reflecting the vision and principles of the Plan.

Policy Wording:

Whilst Persimmon in the main are supportive of this policy wording and particularly like that the policy recognises housing will be supported on the reserve housing site if other housing sites are not developed or post 2031, we would request that the first bullet point is amended to read "*make provision for around 45 dwellings*" deleting reference to "up to". This allows some flexibility when developing a Master plan for the first phase of the site and allows us further scope to make the most efficient use of the land whilst still respecting the surrounding development.

Technical/Site Assessment Work:

Focusing on technical details for the site, access to the site will be via Ashton Road and St. Christopher's Drive which forms the western boundary of the site. Concerns have previously been raised by residents that the junctions would not be able to support the additional traffic movements which would be generated as part of the development site.

Persimmon Homes have revisited the technical work previously undertaken and as identified within the accompanying Transport Assessment (December 2017) can conclude that there will be no detrimental impact on the highway network as a result of the development. Furthermore, ENDC recognised that no extensive new access infrastructure is required as outlined within the North Northamptonshire's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (May 2013).

The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment and Anglian Water pre-development report also state that there are no land stability issues that would pose a threat to the development of the site and that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 which is defined as land having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. As such, the site has a low probability of flooding.

Furthermore, Anglian Water have identified that surface water from the site may be discharged at an outfall towards the far eastern side of the proposed development meaning that some onsite attenuation will be required. It has been identified that the water pumping station located towards the northern corner of the site has limited capacity which means that the development drainage needs to include additional

storage to allow these flows to be stored and discharged at the prescribe rate. This is to be designed into the new drainage network for the site.

In respect of noise, it is recognised by the accompanying Noise Assessment (Nov 2017) that the main source of noise impact will come from the A605 to the eastern boundary of the site. The report concludes that to make levels acceptable to external amenity areas an acoustic fence is installed along (or close to) the eastern site boundary. The acoustic fence should be 3 metres in height with no holes or penetrations and have a surface density of at least 10 kg/m². Furthermore, there will be some enhancement to windows to habitable rooms but until a final layout is known the exact locations and number of dwellings this affects is unknown. The Noise Assessment concludes that using a series of noise mitigation measures, it is unlikely that there will be significant adverse noise impact on the proposed development.

An archaeological desk-based assessment and trial trench evaluation have also been completed and identified the site as having low heritage sensitivity. Furthermore, an ecological appraisal report and further species surveys identify the site as having only limited ecological value. Please refer to the accompanying Ecological Appraisal (Jan 2018) and Badger Monitoring Summary (Dec 2017).

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was carried out as part of the original outline application. This assessment concluded that due to the visually enclosed character of the site, the proposed development could be easily integrated within its surroundings and would not impact on the existing landscape.

The site currently comprises a slightly undulating area covered in rough grassland. The former arable field is enclosed by broadleaved woodland to the north east, east and south west, whilst to the north west the site is contained by existing housing. The visual assessment of the site establishes that the primary visual envelope is limited to the bridleway to the north east, St. Christopher's Drive and the adjoining residential properties.

As outlined within the LVIA, if the landscape strategy and principles outlined in the assessment are implemented as part of the development master plan, the development of the site can be accommodated without causing a negative impact upon the landscape character or visual amenity of Oundle.

Resulting from the above, it is considered that all relevant technical and survey work has been carried out for the site and there are no on-site constraints to development.

Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Methodology (September 2013) results:

Turning to the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base, the Site Assessment Methodology Report produced by Maroon Planning (September 2013) assesses the site against 28 'objective' criteria adopting a simple matrix-based assessment of the likelihood that a site can be developed within the plan period, whether it is suitable in nature and whether development of the site would be compatible with the overarching objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Resulting from this, the St. Christopher's Drive site came out as the best site available for development in respect of 'developability'. The assessment identifies that there are no physical constraints to development, the site would be easily serviced, access to the site is unconstrained and there is a reasonable prospect of the site being available for development over the plan period.

Furthermore the assessment concludes that the site will provide satisfactory access to the town centre for residents as well as being linked to both a network of footpaths and cycle ways and that the site can realistically deliver a varied mix of tenure, size and house types.

Conclusion:

Taking all of the above into account, it is clearly evident from extensive technical assessment work conducted on-site, the positive response from the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment methodology and current site options that this site is the most sustainable option in Oundle for residential development. Additionally, the site is available and deliverable for development now.

In conclusion, it is considered that this site is the most logical site for development and should remain in the Plan through to adoption as a residential allocation.

We would be more than happy to meet with you at your convenience to discuss this in detail and answer any questions you may have.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

Development Planning Manager

E-mail: [Redacted email address]

Tel: [Redacted telephone number]