Matter 5: Longcross Garden Village

Question 5.3: Are the detailed requirements of Policy SC10 justified and deliverable?

1.1 This matter statement has been prepared by Tetlow King Planning Ltd. on behalf of Retirement Villages Ltd, the provider of age exclusive retirement villages across the UK for 35 years. This statement addresses question 5.3 with regard to Policy SD10 in relation to the specific mix of uses within the proposed garden village. This statement only seeks to address the matters set out under question 5.3 (a) to (c).

1. Do the detailed requirements provide a clear, achievable policy framework to help deliver a high quality, distinctive garden village?

1.2 The aspiration to deliver a garden village comprising of traditional housing (market and affordable), together with specialist housing for older people and employment with local services and facilities would promote a sustainable development in its own rights that should result in a distinctive garden village meeting all of the aspirations of guidance for such strategic developments.

1.3 The requirement for the submission and approval of a site wide masterplan should ensure that the result meets all of the relevant design standards in place at the time of such determination. However, the test will be how the village itself functions in regard to the delivery of the specific individual elements.

2. Is the mix of uses, including employment and local facilities and services, justified and deliverable at the right time?

1.4 The requirement under criterion (b) of the policy includes the delivery of “an extra-care facility comprising in the order of 60 units to assist in meeting the specialist accommodation requirements for those with care needs including for an ageing population.” The need for this type of accommodation is not set out in the policy itself or the supporting text and can only justifiably be connected to the requirements set out through policy SL23 in relation to specialist housing for older people (to be covered under Matter 7 on which additional representations are also made).

1.5 On the basis that the accompanying SHMA identifies a requirement for the provision of a total of 515 units of extra care housing over the plan period (annualised at 37 units) demonstrates that there is a need for such a quantum of development and it can therefore be considered a justified component of the wider masterplan.

1.6 However, the question of whether or not such a proposal is deliverable at the right time is harder to address. The current policy sets out no timetable for delivery and as part of a strategic development it is unlikely that any operator of such a scheme would wish to develop that part of the site until all of the neighbouring development has taken place. The reasoning for this is that such developments are typically restricted to occupants over 65 (in practice the typical resident is more in their 70s) and therefore less likely to move into a scheme where development is likely to
continue for several years/decades when they are seeking a place of quiet and comfort within which to age in place and receive the appropriate level of care and support in later life.

1.7 It is therefore more likely that such schemes would be delivered towards the later parts of the strategic development, therefore failing to meet any identified need in the short term (a matter again covered within our representations on Matter 7).

3. Does the evidence justify the proposals for a range of accommodation, including the percentage of housing that is affordable, and are there reasonable prospects that it will be delivered over the Plan period?

1.8 No comments to make.

Prepared by Tetlow King Planning Ltd.

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