HS6.2

Hearing Statement- Main Matter 6 – Community and Social Infrastructure

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD)

Wivenhoe Town Council

23.160

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1. Introduction

1.1 Cerda are instructed on behalf of Wivenhoe Town Council to act on its behalf in respect of the Examination into the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD.

1.2 The Town Council are a key stakeholder and provided representations to the Regulation 19 consultation, making strong objections to the plan.

1.3 This document has been prepared in response to the Planning Inspectors invitation to provide further statements on the soundness of the plan and other elements of the plan ahead of the Examination in Public which starts on May 7th.

2. Matter 6 Questions and Responses

2.1 ***Question 1*** *– Are the requirements of the Policy justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context?*

The policy proposes 4 Primary Schools, a Secondary School and three community hubs to serve up to 9000 homes according to the Section One plan.

The evidence supporting Education needs to serve the Garden Community is scant and difficult to estimate as past build rates and pupil yields may not align with the unique high design standards required to realise this scheme.

Department for Education provides a recommended methodology for estimating pupil yield from housing development, to assist local authorities demonstrating the need for education facilities during local plan preparation and the consideration of planning applications. Pupil yield factors are the number of pupils living in the properties divided by the number of completed properties. The Pupil Yield Data Dashboard are provided for local authorities with a responsibility for providing sufficient school places under the Education Act 1996 – principally analysts/data scientists involved in pupil forecasting and other population modelling.

This shows that, across England, the average number of school age children per home is 0.13 secondary school pupils. Based on DfE's national average pupil yields:

- 100 homes typically include 25 primary and 13 secondary school pupils
- 500 homes typically include 125 primary and 65 secondary school pupils
- 1,000 homes typically include 250 primary and 130 secondary school pupils

However, these figures are a starting point, and the government caveats these figures as follows "Larger homes such as family-sized dwellings typically accommodate more school-age children than smaller homes, such as flats."

Broadly the figures in the policy align with the average pupil yields. However, there is no justification that these figures are appropriate for a scheme which is not average and there is a risk that the proposed Education facilities do not meet the needs of the Garden Community.

Although the policy sets out what is required, repeating the Section One plan, it does not set out how phasing might work or what the trigger points are for delivery

these facilities. In the absence of a CIL schedule these policies should include details of likely contribution requirements.

2.2 ***Question 2*** *– Does the Policy provide clear direction as to how a decision maker should react to a development proposal?*

The Policy lacks clear direction and requires a substantial rewrite to meet its compliance obligations as directed by Section 1. Wivenhoe Town Council is deeply concerned that the safeguards provided by Section 1 have been eroded and without a rewrite poor quality development cannot be avoided. Social infrastructure is absolutely vital to alleviate the dormitory nature of the GC and community spaces, churches, shops, playparks and social care provision should be explicitly defined as without recourse to robust policy they simply will not happen. This will have a negative impact on existing communities who cannot hope to provide the scale of social infrastructure required.

Section 1 policy 24 states *'Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden community, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and* community *and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community*.' Sadly, and regardless of repeated requests, there is no idea of the structure of this (i.e. will it involve existing parishes boundaries or the creation of a new one?) and significant aspects of it (i.e. will ECC Highways adopt the roads, or will new residents have to pay a management fee for this as well as rates). Management companies are extremely unpopular with residents and even at parish level we are continually bombarded with complaints about how they are run and financed. This is obviously the easy route for developers, so we do not understand why a better model is not outlined in the DPD to prevent future problems for residents.

The approach to implement the Stewardship Strategy is not robust. "The implementation programme is usually brought together through a timetabled Implementation Plan to be approved as a planning condition. Implementation will commence long before the first occupation, and depending on the triggers for developer contributions/Section 106 agreements, implementation may even start before formal commencement. "[1] Contrary to the guide the policy lacks information about a suitable timetable or how that might be conditioned, outlining the need for a timetable and likely trigger points is essential to ensure that the policy is delivered and effective.

Any Stewardship Strategy that does not involve a boundary change would need to interact and work alongside existing local government arrangements including Town and Parish Councils. Local parishes would need to change a significant

[1] TCPA, Making stewardship happen: a Process guide for Councils, May 2023

amount of policy if new homes came within their jurisdiction and need more information (and input from local people and parishes) on what arrangements are needed *before* a planning application. Clear stewardship mechanisms are critical to ensuring poor quality development is avoided and these arrangements are evidently unclear to decision makers.

We note that lack of stewardship models has an impact on the character of development discussed elsewhere.

Health care is mentioned within policy 6 but there is no mention of physical delivery of facilities or even what these would be. There is a desperate requirement for clarification of where the catchment for primary health care would be. i.e. which existing facilities would be expected to take on additional patients until facilities are available on site. (Please note Wivenhoe Surgery is in a Victorian school house in a conservation area down a single-track road and any additional capacity will be absorbed by the planned development in the neighbourhood plan) The evidence base is no more specific when it comes to the Health Topic Paper. Yet the proposals for the doctor's surgery at the university has confirmed there will be no access available for Wivenhoe residents regardless of the provision being in the ward of Wivenhoe! Yet Rowhedge, (a 20-minute drive at best) will have access to it. For clarity for those who are not local there is a river in the way.

In the Inspectors letter 10 December 2020 under - Social Infrastructure – schools and health 120. It says *'MM13 also clarifies that education and childcare provision will be phased with new development, and adds a bullet point setting out requirements for laying out new development in such a way as to create the conditions for a healthy community. Without these changes, the policy would be ineffective in achieving its aims.'* And therefore, provide a hinderance rather than help to decision makers. Delivery of health care is partially covered by the IDPFD although what the facilities will be or provide is vague and policy should be amended to ensure health care is deliverable at the relevant scale to match the scale of growth.

The plan is effective or justified and is unsound.