



Rockspring Barwood East Hanney Ltd

Hearing Statements for Vale of White Horse Local  
Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional  
Sites  
Matter 2

Prepared by WYG Environment Planning Transport  
Limited



## Preamble

WYG are instructed by Rockspring Barwood East Hanney Ltd ('our client' hereafter) to provide planning consultancy advice in respect of their land interests at land South of Steventon Road, East Hanney, which lies within the boundary of the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Detailed comments have been made at all stages of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Parts 1 Part 2.

WYG have been representing the client since January 2016 and appeared at the Stage 2 Hearings for the emerging Local Plan on Matters relating to Housing Land Supply and the Spatial Strategy. Prior to WYG's involvement, representations were submitted on behalf of the client by Oxalis Planning.

Representations were made to the Council's Call for Sites consultation in July 2016 and these were supplemented in October 2016, in respect of the Local Plan Part 2. Most recently, submissions were made to the Preferred Options consultation in May 2017 and to the submission Version of the Part 2 Local Plan in November 2017.

Our client's site lies adjacent to the settlement of East Hanney, on its eastern edge (identified in Appendix 1 of Appendix 1). East Hanney is a 'Larger Village' as identified in the Local Plan Part 1, providing a number of services and facilities which meet the day to day needs of the area.

An outline planning application for the development of our client's land interests at East Hanney was refused on 25th November 2015 by VoWH District Council, contrary to the Planning Officer's positive recommendation for approval. The grounds of refusal related to matters of heritage and landscape impact and the absence of a Section 106 Agreement at the point of determination.

A planning appeal was submitted against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission on 26th February 2016 and was heard via the Written Representations procedure (appeal ref: APP/V3120/W/16/3145359). On 7th July 2016 the Inspector issued his decision, dismissing the appeal. The sole ground for dismissal related to the scale of the proposed development, which was considered to be *"out of character with the existing form and layout of the village and disproportionate to its existing size"* (para 36, Inspector's report). It is of note that the refusal was predicated only on scale, and not in relation to the principle of development in this location per se, which was acknowledged to be appropriate in all other technical respects, including the absence of *any* harm to heritage assets.

The site is therefore now promoted for a development of 50-75 dwellings, commensurate with the wider housing distribution strategy established by the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part



1. The merits, benefits and sustainability credentials of the site remain as identified in the May 2017 representations and are not repeated here.

This Hearing Statement seeks to reiterate and update where necessary, comments previously made in respect of the Submission Version Local Plan Part 2 and associated Sustainability Appraisal, to confirm our Client's position. The Statement is structured under the following broad themes, flowing from the Inspector's Matters and Questions:

**Matters to which this Statement refers:**

Matter 2 – specifically Inspector's question 2.5



## **Matter 2: Unmet housing needs from Oxford**

**Inspector's Question 2.5:** *"Given the NPPF requirement for exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated for any alterations to the Green Belt and the availability of potential sites, is the balance of the strategy between Green Belt releases (on site – Dalton Barracks) and sites outside the Green Belt the most appropriate?"*

The NPPF currently requires alterations to Green Belt boundaries to be made through Local Plan reviews, and to be sufficient such that they plan for needs beyond the end of the current Plan period (para 83). It is also noted that the emerging NPPF consultation draft (para 136) looks set to introduce a sequential test for release of land from the Green Belt.

In this context, whilst the site at Dalton Barracks is previously developed land that is proposed to meet needs for this Plan period, and beyond, part of it is a greenfield site and to be found sound, and to demonstrate exceptional circumstances from the Green Belt the Council should have demonstrated that all other non Green Belt sites, such as my client's at East Hanney, could not meet the housing requirements without the need to release land from the Green Belt. It is considered that a number of non Green Belt sites may meet the Council's housing requirements, without the need for such a large Green Belt land release.