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21 April 2016

FAO Dave Barber
Planning Policy Manager
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Dear Mr Barber

REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE PUBLICATION DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – RADFORD SEMELE

We write on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd (Taylor Wimpey) in respect of their land interests to the south of Southam Road, Radford Semele. You will be aware that Barton Willmore made representations to the Publication Draft Local Plan in June 2014 in respect of Taylor Wimpey's Radford Semele site.

Following these representations, RPS Planning & Development (RPS) has been instructed to represent Taylor Wimpey's land interests in respect of this site and therefore for the purposes of the Proposed Modifications and any future correspondence, I would be grateful if you could liaise with RPS, as opposed to Barton Willmore specifically in relation to representations made in relation to this site. Taylor Wimpey's land interests relate to site R161 as identified in the 2016 SHLAA (Rural Assessments).

Barton Willmore (BW) is continuing to represent Taylor Wimpey in relation to other sites and wider strategy issues along with the overall housing requirements of the Local Plan.

PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED

You will be aware that BW submitted representations to the Publication Draft relating to the Radford Semele site. These representations are still relevant, but are supplemented by the representations made here in relation to the Proposed Modifications (2016). Purely for purposes of clarification the representations made by BW, in the context of promotion of the Radford Semele site, relate to the following policies/area of the Local Plan:

- Plan Period
- Vision and Objectives
- DS6 – Level of Housing Growth
- DS20 – Duty to Cooperate
- Policy HO – Housing
- Policy H2 – Affordable Housing
- Policy H10 – Growth Villages.

As indicated above, these representations still stand, but are to be considered in conjunction with and alongside the representations made below to the Proposed Modifications.

REPRESENTATION TO PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The basis for these representations relates to the inadequacies of the Council's SA concerning the apportionment of growth to the Growth Villages and to the consideration of alternatives for housing at the Growth Village of Radford Semele. The comments primarily relate to the February 2016 SA Addendum (Addendum), albeit reference is made to additional supporting documents.

Paragraph 2.7 of the Addendum notes that due to the additional Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) it was necessary to consider the options for the delivery of growth and paragraph 2.10 noting this entailed a review of SHLAA sites along with a further call for sites, and paragraph 2.11 noting that new sites options were subject to SA.

Our concerns in relation to the SA as addressed below, relates to the lack of an individual site assessment for Taylor Wimpey's land interests at Radford Semele. This relates to the SA Addendum process, which has been undertaken to accommodate the additional up-lift in housing requirement following the Inspector's Interim conclusions. This focuses on the lack of suitable consideration as an identified alternative for Taylor Wimpey's land interests at Radford Semele.

A screen print is provided below of the SA assessment from Table 4.20: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection, which appears to represent the Council's consideration of Alternatives, in the context of Radford Semele. Taylor Wimpey's land interests relate to their land South of Southam Road (RS1*O). This rejection is confirmed in Appendix VIII of the 2015 SA (page 90) as indicated below.

Figure 1 – Extract from Feb 2015 SA (page 90)

Radford Semele	
Site(s): RS1*O – Land South of Southam Road	Rejected option – site is located within an area of high landscape value. Limited options to contain development.
Site(s): RS1*O – Land South of Southam Road (Expanded)	Rejected option – site is located within an area of high landscape value. Limited options to contain development.

ary 2015

90/126

Enfusion

Warwick District Council Submission Local Plan
SA Report

RS2*O – Land North of Southam Road	Site progressed – originally rejected on insufficient highways access, which has now been resolved. Site will require substantial environmental screening, but development will need to minimise ribbon development along the A425.
RS3*O – South West Radford Semele	Rejected option – local concerns about the coalescence of settlements at this sensitive south western corner of the village, also likely to add significantly to congestion within the village along School Lane.
RS4*O – Land to the East of Church Lane	Rejected option – site revaluated as high landscape value, development of which would lead to a loss of valued land providing a rural setting to the village and church.

It is noted the site (RS1*O) was considered along with all other potential site allocations at Radford Semele in the 2015 SA (Appendix VI page 47). This provided some commentary on selective aspects of the assessment for the sites in the supporting text. This did not, however, provide an individual assessment for the site within the SA to enable Taylor Wimpey to gain an understanding of why its site was rejected in comparison with alternative locations. Instead it appears to have grouped all such sites under one heading.

Figure 2 Extracts from 2015 SA (Appendix VI – page 47)

Radford Semele																				
Site(s): RS1*O – Land South of Southam Road; RS2*O – Land North of Southam Road; Expanded RS2*O; RS3*O – South West Radford Semele; RS4*O – Land to the East of Church Lane																				
SA Objectives	Economy	Sustainable transport	Reduce need to travel	Waste & Recycling	Prudent use of land and natural resources	Natural environment & landscape	Built environment	Historic environment	Air, water & soil quality	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation - flood risk	Housing needs	Local services & community facilities	Health & well being	Poverty & social exclusion	Crime				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16				
Appraisal Summary for Village	?	+ +	--	-	-	--	--	-	+	-	?	-	-	=	++	?	+	=	+	?

The consideration of Alternatives is then referred to in the 2016 SA Addendum (Appendix IV) in the context of the up-lift in housing requirements and the Potential Village Site Allocations. In relation to Radford Semele a screen print is provided below of the Addendum's limited assessment of the site.

Figure 3 Extract from 2016 SA Addendum (Appendix VI)

Radford Semele									
Site(s): RS1*O – Land South of Southam Road	R41	Discounted Option.	Subject to SA, appraisal presented alongside the Consultation Doc for public consultation in November 2013.	No change to site. Discounted Option.	No further appraisal work required. Reasons for the selection/ rejection of Options provided in Section 4 of the SA Report.	No change to site. Discounted Option.	No further SA work required. Appraisal of site presented in Appendix VI and reasons for rejection provided in Table 4.20.	Site still not included. No changes.	No further SA work required.
Site(s): RS1*O – Land South of Southam Road (Expanded)	R129	Discounted Option.	Subject to SA, appraisal presented alongside the Consultation Doc for public consultation in November 2013.	No change to site. Discounted Option.	No further appraisal work required. Reasons for the selection/ rejection of Options provided in Section 4 of the SA Report.	No change to site. Discounted Option.	No further SA work required. Appraisal of site presented in Appendix VI and reasons for rejection provided in Table 4.20.	Site still not included. No changes.	No further SA work required.
RS2*O – Land North of Southam Road	R67	Discounted Option.	Subject to SA, appraisal presented alongside the Consultation Doc for public consultation in November 2013.	Updated evidence now indicates no major issues with highways access Preferred Option.	Appraisal for this settlement has been updated to reflect the evidence. Please refer to Appendix VII. Reasons for the selection/ rejection of Options provided in Section 4 of the SA Report.	No change to site. Preferred Option.	No further SA work required. Appraisal of site presented in Appendix VI and reasons for selection provided in Table 4.20.	Site has planning permission and is included in commitments. Site allocation H38.	No further SA work required.

The above assessments indicate that the site was rejected in 2015 due to its 'high landscape value'. This appears to be (through the SA) the basis for rejection of the site. As indicated through the 2016 Addendum, no further SA work in relation to the site was carried out.

The approach taken is in contrast with the way in which the Council has now undertaken its assessment of its preferred site at Radford Semele. Here the Council has undertaken a detailed assessment (on its own) of the Land at Spring Lane. As extract of the SA assessment of this site is provided in Figure 4 below:

Figure 4 SA Addendum 2016 (Appendix III page 45)

Radford Semele

Site: Radford Semele - Land at Spring Lane Size & Approx. Capacity: 60 dwellings SHLAA Ref: Extension to previously assessed site RS3*10 (Submission Local Plan SA Report 2015)																		
SA Objectives	Economy	Sustainable transport	Reduce need to travel	Waste & Recycling	Prudent use of land and natural resources	Natural environment & landscape	Built environment	Historic environment	Air, water & soil quality	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation - flood risk	Housing needs	Local services & community facilities	Health & well being	Poverty & social exclusion	Crime		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
Appraisal Summary	+	+	-	-	= ?	-	- ?	=	=	-	-	=	+	+	+	= ?	+	= ?

In relation to the SA and in particular the Modification process, an additional up-lift in housing requirement following the Inspector's Interim conclusions is required. The Council's preferred option is the focus of growth via Option 5 of the Addendum necessitating the protection of the Green Belt. Given this Option, there does not appear to have been a consistent and appropriate consideration of reasonable alternatives to growth at Radford Semele.

Reasonable alternatives and the consideration of them should be fair, equitable and by public scrutiny. Despite Taylor Wimpey's continued promotion of the site over several years through the Development Plan and SHLAA process the site does not appear to have been appraised through the SA on an individual basis at any time now, or historically.

In this regard, the Council has failed in its SEA/SA process to appraise the land South of Southam Road as an alternative alongside the selected Land at Spring Lane, Radford Semele. While it is understood that SA/SEA evidence can be compiled within the later stages of plan making¹, it cannot be undertaken retrospectively where decisions would lead to prejudice. It therefore appears, the Council has failed to meet Article 2 of the SEA Directive. Annex I to Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive requires the environmental assessment to include:

“an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical difficulties or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the information required.”

¹ Cogent Land LLP v Rochford District Council (September 2012)

It has been clarified in case law² that the requirement is for all reasonable alternatives to be assessed fairly, equitably and by public scrutiny. The Council's SA it does not give adequate reasons for rejecting Taylor Wimpey's land interests in favour of the Spring Lane site, or additional growth at Radford Semele. In summary, the alternatives have not been appraised to the same level as the preferred option.

Whilst Taylor Wimpey is fully supportive of the general plan making process and advancing the Local Plan, this should not be at the expense of proper scrutiny and assessment of the alternative site allocations, particularly at Radford Semele. The Council has failed in its compliance with this requirement and should undertake this SA work as part of the Examination process.

Mod 3 - Policy DS4

Support is provided for site allocations to be provided on the edge of built-up areas as opposed to urban area.

Mod 6 – Policy DS7

Whilst BW (on Taylor Wimpey's behalf) is making separate representation in relation to the need for additional housing requirement in the Local Plan, in the context of Policy DS7, the following observations are made by RPS in relation to the windfall allowance.

The proposed modification includes additional housing provision as a result of the uplift based on Coventry's requirement. Associated with this up-lift is an allowance of 1,134 dwellings from windfall sites coming forward over the plan period. In addition to which a small urban site allowance is provided.

Whilst it is acceptable to retain the small urban windfall allowance, the 1,134 windfall allowance represents a very considerable source of future housing supply and in RPS's view should be converted into positive allocations. As referred to elsewhere in these representations additional capacity exists within the Growth Villages and in particular at Radford Semele. Given the need to boost significantly the supply of housing land, the Local Plan, should make positive allocations, consistent with paragraph 47 of the NPPF (3rd bullet), rather than relying on an unidentified potential source of supply.

There is no certainty that such provision (windfall allowance of 1,134) will continue to come forward over the plan period, but should additional sites come forward, this would be consistent with a flexible plan and paragraph 14 of the NPPF and does not need a specific allowance.

In addition, the housing requirement figure of 16,776 new homes should also be referred to as a minimum housing requirement, consistent with other plans with Warwickshire.

² Save Historic Newmarket Ltd v Secretary of State & Forest Heath District Council (March 2011) and Heard v Broadland District Council, South Norfolk District Council, Norwich City Council (Feb 2012).

Mod 10 - Policy DS.11 and Mod 19 Policies Map - H.52 – Radford Semele

In conjunction with Policy DS11 the Policies Map identifies and allocates housing sites including at Radford Semele.

The Policies Map has allocated Site H52 Land at Spring Lane for development of approximately 60 dwellings. Until such time as a comparative assessment of all reasonable alternatives has taken place, it is not possible to form a view on the most appropriate location for sites in the Growth Village. For the reasons explained in relation to the representations to the Sustainability Appraisal, Taylor Wimpey does not consider an appropriate assessment of reasonable alternatives has taken place in relation to the options available at Radford Semele.

Policy DS11 identifies Growth Villages and within this lists Radford Semele. Taylor Wimpey are of the view that given the environmental and infrastructure capacity, additional housing should be provided at this Growth Village, which by virtue of its proximity to Warwick/Leamington, its size, location outside the Green Belt and existing services and facilities, is already recognised as one of the most sustainable settlements within the District.

The Council's Settlement Hierarchy report identified Radford Semele as one of 5 Primary Service Villages and whilst that classification has not found its way into policy formation, it is evident from the settlement hierarchy report the village is suitably accommodated to deliver additional housing beyond existing commitments. It is also noted that in the Preferred Options Report (2012) classified Radford Semele as a Category 1 Village. The village scores 3rd highest out of all the villages (Table 4.4 of the Report) with a score of 53. The only reason it does not come out on top, is due to the lack of a GP's practice within the village.

However, the village is located extremely closely to the Croft Medical Centre (on the edge of Leamington) in Sydenham. This is only separated from the village by a fields width and very easily accessible for existing and future residents of Radford Semele. Should the location of that GP be factored into the settlement hierarchy, Radford would have a score of 58 and be classified as the most sustainable village settlement in the District.

It is recognised that Radford Semele has two consents of 125 dwellings and a proposed allocation of a further 60 dwellings. However, for the reasons stated above, the village is arguably the most sustainable Growth Village and capable of additional residential growth, beyond existing commitments. This is further demonstrated by the approval of 150 dwellings south of Bishops Tachbrook on a site proposed as an emerging allocation. Radford Semele, is a larger village, with a higher sustainability rating.

Should the Examination process establish that additional sites are required, then in Taylor Wimpey's view Radford Semele is well placed to accommodate some of that additional growth. In particular its land interests South of Southam Road, is available and achievable, as indicated in the 2015 SHLAA (Site 161). The principal reason stated in the SHLAA and the SA as indicated for its non-allocation is in relation to concerns over landscape impact.

Such concerns over landscape impact lack justification. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared for the site demonstrates the suitability of the site in landscape terms. The LVIA also indicates that landscape studies carried out by Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council concluded that the wider landscape context of the Site was open in character and highly sensitive to residential development. However, within the WCC Landscape Sensitivity and Ecological & Geological Study under the heading "Landscape Characteristics (Desktop)" the visual sensitivity of the land cover parcel that the site sits within is described as "Moderate". Typically within the studies the site has been included within a large landscape parcel including the countryside to the south and south-east of the Site.

Taylor Wimpey's LVIA (which can be provided to the Council) provides a more informed assessment of the site than this much wider parcel assessment and concludes that the site is not as visually sensitive as the countryside to the south and south-east of the site due to the intervening topography screening it from longer distance views. This LVIA supports the proposed development of the site and the opportunities it presents to significantly improve the structure of the landscape within the site and to increase habitat potential and improve biodiversity. The zones of green infrastructure proposed to the boundaries of the site and their associated structural landscaping will soften the visual impact of the residential development over a 15 year time period and help integrate the Site into its context.

The site is located within a well-established landscape framework. Existing Public Right of Ways (PRoW) will be retained within areas of green infrastructure and a new play area provided. Existing mature trees and hedgerows will be retained where possible although there will be an element of tree and hedgerow removal to facilitate safe/egress access from the Site onto the A425 Southam Road.

Green infrastructure has been proposed to the southern boundary of the site to protect and enhance PRoW W123 which is an important footpath link between Radford Semele and the countryside to the east. Views across the rolling landscape to the south have been preserved from the PRoW with intermittent new tree planting proposed to soften views of the development from the south. From the wider countryside to the south, east and north the site is typically obscured from view due to intervening topography especially from the villages of Harbury and Ufton to the south and west due to Crown Hill and Radford Hill and the elevated topography that connects them. Overall, the LVIA demonstrates the suitability of the site from a landscape perspective.

Taylor Wimpey is in the process of preparing a planning application for the site and as part of this process has undertaken a suite of evidence base reports. This includes highway, ecology, archaeology, flooding, noise etc. These demonstrate there are no site specific technical reasons for the site to not be suitable for housing. Attached to these representations at **Appendix 1** is a draft Land Use Plan for the site which indicates its suitability for up to 115 dwellings.

These representations demonstrate the suitability of the land South of Southam Road, Radford Semele, to provide a suitable location for housing growth to fulfil Policy DS11 requirements.

Conclusion

Concerns have been raised in relation to the inappropriateness of the Sustainability Appraisal and in particular the lack of an appraisal to the same level of detail as the preferred option at Radford Semele. They also demonstrate that in the context of Radford Semele, there exists a genuine basis for additional housing growth to take place at the Growth Village, beyond existing commitments, and its land interests at Radford Semele as an Omission Site should be favourably considered as part of that process.

Given the land interests of Taylor Wimpey, RPS wish to participate at the Examination session in relation to the SA, Mod 6 and Mod 10 sessions and would be grateful of being kept informed of progress.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Hill', written in a cursive style.

PAUL HILL BA(Hons) MA MRTPI
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The scaling of this drawing cannot be assured

Revision	Date	Drn	Ckd
B Development and Open Space Update	13.04.16	JW	DS

- Site Boundary - 7.78Ha
- Area A**
- Existing Highway - 0.42Ha
- Area B**
- Development Area - 3.41Ha
- Proposed Infrastructure 0.02Ha
- Existing Footpath - 0.07Ha
- Amenity Green Space and Natural Areas - 1.38Ha
- ★ Childrens Play Area - 0.08Ha (828m²)
- Structural Woodland & Hedgerow Planting 0.97Ha
- } POS Provision 1.46Ha
- Note: Outdoor Sports and Allotments: Off-site Provision/Contribution
- Area C**
- Proposed Drainage Attenuation Pond/Volume (1830m³ as MEC Drawing) - 0.16Ha
- Area for Surface Water Sewer, Access Track and Drainage Attenuation Basin - 1.26Ha
- Public Right of Way (PROW)
- Root Protection Area
- Existing Trees
- Trees to be Removed

DRAFT

Project
**SOUTH OF SOUTHAM ROAD,
 RADFORD SEMELE**

Drawing Title
**LAND USE PLAN
 115 DWELLINGS**

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
07.04.16	1:1250@A2	JW	DS
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
23253	RG-M-12	B	

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